00021048

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016

MOHAN LAL, R.I.S.

LIFE

OF THE

AMIR DOST MOHAMMED KHAN,

OF

KABUL:

WITH HIS POLITICAL PROCEEDINGS TOWARDS THE

ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, AND PERSIAN GOVERNMENTS,

INCLUDING THE

VICTORY AND DISASTERS OF THE BRITISH ARMY

IN

AFGHANISTAN.

24048 ac

BY MOHAN LAL, ESQ.,

KNIGHT OF THE PERSIAN ORDER OF THE LION AND SUN; LATELY ATTACHED TO THE MISSION IN KABUL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1846.

21048

London :—Printed by William Clowes and Sons, Stamford Street.

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY

HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

DEDICATION

TO

HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA,

SOVEREIGN OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE,

AND TO HER ROYAL CONSORT,

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE ALBERT.

Since the creation of the world it has been the custom and rule of the devoted loyal servants of every ancient and modern Government, that either on receiving marks of distinction, or the honour of being presented to their lawful Sovereign, they submit some present showing their homage and attachment to the Throne. This usage of submissive devotion has not been limited to human beings, but it has been adopted ever by other species of God's creatures, and has met with the approbation of the greatest in the world. If we trace back as far as three thousand years, we find, from tradition as well as from historical anecdotes, one of the most striking instances in an insignificant creature of God, namely, a small ant having secured a grain of rice in its forceps, crept some distance, and having gained an access

into the presence of the wise and great Solomon, laid it under his feet, who accepted the said present!!

My fortunes have been bright, and I may say enviable, even in this land, by having the honour of being presented to your Majesty and to your Royal Highness, and also invited to your palace. The conversation which I had the good fortune to have with your Royal Highness, mingled with your detailed and minute knowledge of all the said events of Afghanistan, did not only cause sensations of surprise in me, but was a source of proud gratification as showing that the conduct and zeal of public servants abroad, whether English or foreigner, are justly noticed and appreciated by so dignified a personage as your Royal Highness. Taking all the preceding points into consideration, I am utterly at a loss how to show my heartfelt gratitude, and in what manner to lay my unfeigned homage and devoted attachment at the feet of your gracious Majesty and your Royal Highness but by dedicating this work—the unworthy endeavours of my feeble pen in a foreign language.

If the honour so to dedicate this book is conferred upon me, it will at once show to the subjects of your Majesty's Indian Empire, that your Majesty knows how to appreciate their fidelity and devotion, and will lead them to the lofty consideration and appreciation of their present English Sovereign in a more dignified manner than they or their predecessors had ever enjoyed.

For my own humble part, I shall say no more; but conclude this dedication by adding that, while I live I shall consider myself the proudest and happiest servant by promoting the honour and interest of your mighty Government, and with heart shall ever pray, that as long as the oceans are filled with water, and the heavens decorated with sun and moon, the gracious shadow of your Majesty and his Royal Highness the Prince Albert may never be diminished from the heads of your British and Indian subjects, and both the kingdoms of England and India may never be deprived of the protection of your royal descendants.

MOHAN LAL, *Kashmirian.*

(*In the Service of the Honourable East India Company.*)

4, *George Street, Manchester Square,*
London, 20*th June,* 1846.

PREFACE.

THE kind reception which my late publication, 'Travels in the Panjab and Afghanistan,' has met with from the public, deserves my hearty thanks. The greater part of my Travels having been published some years ago, had in some measure lost the interest of novelty; but the flattering mention made of them in the last edition of the valuable work of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone,* a most

* "Mohan Lal, a (Kashmirian) gentleman of Delhi, accompanied Sir Alexander Burnes to Bokhara, and came back by Mashad and Hirat, has also published his travels. They appeared in English at Calcutta, and would have been invaluable if they had not been preceded by the works already mentioned. Even now they contain much new matter, and from the spirit of inquiry and observation as well as the command of a foreign language which they display, reflect high credit on the author and on the English Institution (now the College) at Delhi, where he received his education."—ELPHINSTONE'S *Kabul*, 1838.

talented and respected authority of this country, induced me to reprint them, with some additional information on the Commerce of the marts on the Indus.

Neither in the preceding publication nor in this, do I for a moment pretend to boast of the value of its information, eloquence, or style. On the contrary, I am fearfully conscious of abundant errors both in grammar, idiom, and, above all, of repetitions; but when I tell the public that I am a stranger to the customs, manners, and in great measure to the language of the English, and that I have written the MSS. and published these two volumes in a short space of time, without the assistance of a friend, as I had expected, I feel assured that I shall be excused on account of these great deficiencies. Whatever portion of the MSS. of these volumes (excepting about one hundred pages in the beginning) I was able to write every day, went to press immediately in the same way; and this will plainly account for errors and repetitions.

Besides the great expense incurred by the publishers in bringing out my late Travels, and these volumes, I beg to state, that about 300*l.* has been

disbursed by me in employing a copyist, paper, and some of the portraits; a fact which will exonerate me from the imputation of having published them merely with the view of benefiting myself by their sale.

Whilst in Afghanistan I had prepared the 'Life of Dost Mohammed Khan,' both in English and Persian; and the information on which the MS. was prepared was supplied to me by his own courtiers and relations: but unfortunately all the MSS. were plundered during the insurrection of Kabul, and delivered to Mohammed Akbar Khan, who refused to give them back to me on any account. Afterwards it was out of my power to collect such satisfactory accounts as would place the circumstances of the Amir's life in a chronological series; and I therefore fear that these volumes will on many occasions be open to censure for misplacing the occurrences and the subjects contained in them.

The anecdotes inserted in the work, and especially in reference to the adventures and morals of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, &c., were generally communicated to me by the people with whom he associated. Not knowing what would be agreeable

to the "English mind," and anxious as I was to avoid anything unpleasant of every kind, particularly when the Dedication was approved of by Her Majesty, and returned to me with only one correction, I wrote to the publishers and printers to erase such lines from the manuscripts as they might think not consistent with the rules of this country. To this, I am told, they kindly attended.

The Dedication to Her Majesty, and, I may say, the whole of the work, is written after the Persian style. Purity of idiom and eloquence in composition, which are at the command of the natives of this civilized land, are not to be expected from a foreigner of a limited education, like myself. The generosity of the impartial community at large will, on these considerations, forgive me for the blunders of every description which may disfigure the pages of these unworthy volumes.

The observations which I have made on our policy in Afghanistan, the reasons of sending an expedition, its means of success, and the cause of the disasters, are entirely the repetition of what I had despatched to the Government of India, in 1842, and which received the favourable notice of the Earl of

Ellenborough, then Governor-General of India. His Lordship writes to the Secret Committee at home in the following flattering manner.*

"In the letter from the intelligent Mohan Lal, which forms one of the enclosures of this letter, your Honourable Committee will be put in possession of the manner in which the King Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk was, on the 5th April, treacherously murdered by a son of Navab Mohammed Zaman Khan.

"Your Honourable Committee will peruse with deep interest the observations on the causes of the late insurrection at Kabul.

"Your Honourable Committee will find amongst the enclosures No. 24, an interesting paper by Mohan Lal, on the causes of the Afghan insurrection, and on the events which succeeded the outbreak at Kabul in November last.

(Signed) "ELLENBOROUGH."

The opinions so favourably expressed by this high

* 'Parliamentary Blue Book of Afghanistan,' pages 262, 264, 341.—I have left out many words, and omitted several other names, to make this extract as short as possible.

and talented personage then holding the reins of the empire of India, will, I am sure, be a sufficient ground for me to request the public to throw a glance on the contents of these volumes, and to grant forgiveness for the errors.

MOHAN LAL, *Kashmirian.*

30*th June*, 1846.

4, *George Street,*
Manchester Square, London.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Sons of Abdal—Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, late Captain Arthur Conolly, and Sir Alexander Burnes—Predecessors of Dost Mohammed Khan—Origin of the Afghans—Sons of Rahimdad—Dost's Father becomes Chief—Promoted—Goes to punish the Momand Chief—Gets a title—Goes to fight the Osbeks—Places Zaman on the throne—Salary of Dost's father—Dost strikes coin so as to honour the name of his father—Envy of Vafadar Khan against Sarfraz Khan—Names of the Chiefs murdered with Sarfraz Khan—Folly of Vafadar Khan—Miracle of Dost's uncle . . . . . .

CHAPTER II.

Brothers of Dost Mohammed Khan—Dost's early training—Shah Zaman—Dost becomes the confidential attendant of Fatah Khan—Defeat of Shah Shuja—Youth of Dost Mohammed Khan—He returns to Kabul—His sister married to Shah Shuja—Fatah Khan's treaty with Mukhtar and with Qaisar—Intrepidity of Dost—He and Fatah leave Qandhar—They rebel from Shah Shuja—Are compelled to return to Qandhar—Fatah Khan is confined, and Dost escapes—Dost besieges Qandhar—Fatah is released—

PAGE

Dost and Fatah join Kam Ran—Dost gains a victory—Fights with Shuja—Makes peace, and allies himself with Shuja—Dost and his brother desert the camp—Shuja gains a victory—Measures of Dost—His bravery—He defeats his enemy—Shah Mahmud becomes king, Fatah Khan Vazir, and Dost is dignified—Mirza Ali Khan—Mohammed Azim Khan—Dost is made Sardar—Expedition to Kashmir—Rebellion in Kabul—Suppressed—War with the Sikhs 21

CHAPTER III.

Brothers envy Dost Mohammed Khan—He chastises the Kohistanis—Expedition against Hirat—Murder of the Vazir Fatah Khan—The Sardar takes up arms—Besieges the Bala Hisar—Takes Kabul, and makes Sultan Ali king, and himself minister—His intrigues—Murder of Shah Sultan Ali—Mohammed Azim Khan—The Sardar procures money from the Sindhians—He deserts—Takes Ghazni—Fights with Azim Khan—Corresponds with Ranjit Singh—Sikh force at Peshavar—Dost's treachery towards Azim Khan—Death of Azim Khan . . . 90

CHAPTER IV.

Succession of Habib-ullah Khan—He is defeated by the Sardar—Peace is concluded between them—Habib-ullah's secret intentions—Flight of the Sardar—Sherdil Khan and the Sardar join against Habib-ullah—Policy of Dost—He takes the Bala Hisar—Intrigues and rupture between Sherdil and Dost—Siege of the Bala Hisar—Peace between the brothers—Death of Sherdil Khan—The Sardar sole master of Kabul—Sayad Ahmad's war with the Sikhs—Rebellion at Tagav, and defeat of the Kabul force 130

CHAPTER V.

PAGE

Haji Khan joins the Sardar—The Sardar punishes the rebels—Takes Bala Bagh and Jalalabad—Jealousy of the brothers—His escape from assassination—Marches against Shah Shuja—His letter to the British political agent at Lodianah—Sir Claude Wade's answer—The Sardar writes to Shah Shuja—Reaches Qandhar, and defeats Shah Shuja-ul-mulk—Correspondence discovered among the spoils—Ingratitude of the Qandhar chiefs towards Dost Mohammed Khan—The Sardar's interview with his dying brother—Flight and evil designs of the Peshavar chiefs—Haji Khan Kakar 150

CHAPTER VI.

Preparations for a new expedition against the Sikhs—Design of the Sardar to assume the Royal title—He is surnamed Amir-ul-momnin—His method of procuring money—Barbarity exercised towards a rich trader—New coinage—The Sikhs depute Dr. Harlan to Sultan Mohammed Khan—The Amir is incensed, and threatens Dr. Harlan—He encamps at Shekhan—Truce with the Sikhs—The Amir's treacherous designs—His violent altercation with Pir Mohammed Khan—His plans and counsellors—Ranjit Singh arrives and sends an embassy to the Amir—Oath of friendship between the Amir and Sultan Mohammed Khan—The Amir seizes the Sikh envoys—Breaks up his camp—Sultan Mohammed takes the captive envoys with him—Rage of the Amir . . 168

CHAPTER VII.

Difficult situation of the Amir—Duplicity of the Qandhar chiefs—The Amir designs to seize some nobles—His

PAGE

plan betrayed by Akhundzadah—He arrests Abdullah Khan Achakzai—Releases him—Sisters of the Amir—Saddu Khan murdered by a Kohistani bribed by his wife 183

CHAPTER VIII.

The Amir fears the Hazarahs—History of Yazdan Bakhsh—Dost Mohammed's plan for seizing the Hazarah chief—Courage and devotion of his wife—Both are seized by the Amir—They negotiate for their release—The Mir escapes, and afterwards his wife—He consolidates his power—Haji Khan and Mir Yazdan Bakhsh—The Khan plans the ruin of the Hazarah Mir—His scheme to entrap him—Fails—He makes Haji Khan Governor of the Hazarahjat—Becomes suspicious of him—Haji Khan seizes Mir Yazdan Bakksh—Plunder of the Hazarahs—The Mir is strangled—The Sardar's relations with Persia—His education—He humbles his rival relatives, and increases his own power—Disgrace of Haji Khan—The Amir's administration of justice 192

CHAPTER IX.

The Wives of the Amir—Their jealousies—Cruel treatment of one of them by the Amir—An anecdote—A Kashmirian wife—Her escape from the Amir—Bitter enmity entertained towards the Amir by Sultan Mohammed Khan—Wives, Sons, and Daughters of the Amir—His policy of depressing his brothers and raising his sons to power—Expedition against the Sikhs—Mirza Abdul Sami Khan arrives at the camp—Victory of the Afghans—Honours bestowed on Akbar Khan—How to estimate the sons of the Amir—State of the Amir's dominions—Revenues—Encouragement of Commerce—Character of the Amir—His military force . 214

CHAPTER X.

PAGE

Connexion of the British with Afghanistan—Policy of Russia—Her alliance with Persia—The Afghans lean towards the British Government—Claims on Peshavar—Policy of Lord William Bentinck—Of Lord Auckland—Letter from the Amir to the Governor-General—Reply of the latter—Mission of Sir Alexander Burnes—The Amir demands the restoration of Peshavar—Sir Alexander's Reply—Dissatisfaction of Dost Mohammed Khan—His letter to the King of Persia—His plan of balancing Russia, Persia, and England against each other . 243

CHAPTER XI.

A Persian Envoy arrives at Qandhar—The Chiefs of that place make a treaty with him—Letter from the Shah of Persia to the Amir—Instructions of the Persian Envoy—Mr. Ellis's despatch to Lord Palmerston—Sir John Macneil at the Persian Court—The Shah marches against Hirat—Despatches of Sir John Macneil—Russian intrigues—Various letters to the Chiefs of Qandhar—Their treaty with the Shah, under the guarantee of Russia—Negotiations of Sir A. Burnes at Kabul—The Russian Envoy, Capt. Vikovich—Diplomatic etiquette in Asiatic courts—Letters relating to Capt. Vikovich—His proceedings at Kabul—Progress of Russian influence there—The English mission retires—Various documents 265

CHAPTER XII.

The British Mission leaves Kabul—Iniquitous counsels given to the Amir respecting it—He rejects them—The Amir attaches himself wholly to Russia—Departure of Captain Vikovich—Honours paid him—Affairs of Sindh

PAGE

—Opinions current in Hindustan relative to Russia—The Asiatics anticipate reverses for the British power in the East—Correspondence, and other Documents—Reasons for the advance of the Army of the Indus—Negotiations set on foot by the British Government . 334

CHAPTER XIII.

Reluctance of the Indian Government to interfere with Captain Vikovich—Proceedings of Count Simonich—Sir A. Burnes and Sir J. Macneil urge the necessity of vigorous measures—The north-western Frontier—Lord Wellesley's opinion—Policy of the British government—Shah Shuja—Correspondence, and extracts from various sources illustrative of British policy in Afghanistan—The British government resolve to restore Shah Shuja—Mission to Ranjit Singh—Tripartite Treaty—Preparations—Declaration of the Governor-General—Letter to the Shah of Persia 360

LIFE

OF THE

AMIR DOST MOHAMMED KHAN,

OF

KABUL.

CHAPTER I.

Sons of Abdal—Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, late Captain Arthur Conolly, and Sir Alexander Burnes—Predecessors of Dost Mohammed Khan—Origin of the Afghans—Sons of Rahimdad—Dost's Father becomes Chief—Promoted—Goes to punish the Momand Chief—Gets a title—Goes to fight the Osbeks—Places Zaman on the throne—Salary of Dost's father—Dost strikes coin so as to honour the name of his father—Envy of Vafadar Khan against Sarfraz Khan—Names of the Chiefs murdered with Sarfraz Khan—Folly of Vafadar Khan—Miracle of Dost's uncle.

ABDAL was the first and founder of the Abdali tribe. He left three sons, namely, Fofal, Barak, and Alako. If I were to mention the names and lineal descent of the offspring of Fofal and Alako, it would lengthen

this book too much. The very valuable account of the kingdom of Kabul, by the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, contains a correct and minute description of their descendants, as well as botanical, mineral, and animal information concerning that territory. In short, this interesting work has been a guide to many, and is as useful to travellers in Afghanistan as the mariner's compass is to voyagers on the seas. This honourable gentleman has made an everlasting impression on the minds of the people of Central Asia of his most amiable, kind, and noble disposition. It is a source of great pride to the travellers of Europe or British India to hear his name even into the remotest parts of Afghanistan with respect and tone of affection from the lips of those who are in general unaware of the names of the distinguished men of their own country. His generosity has gained for him the immortal name of "Hatim Tai,"* and his talents as a statesman the high appellation of "Socrates."† I can without any hesitation say that it was the name of "Ulfrishteen" (Elphinstone) which was the passport for the "army of the

* Famous for unlimited bounties in the old Persian histories

† Celebrated minister and adviser of Alexander the Great.

Indus" to march through Afghanistan without any opposition. The valuable books of the late Captain Arthur Conolly and of Sir Alexander Burnes give us descriptions which also add to our knowledge of this celebrated and far-extended tribe. My object is to write about the early life, rise, and government of Dost Mohammed Khan, mentioning the names of his immediate predecessors, the sons of Barak, and not the sons of Fofal and of Alako.

Haji Jamal Khan, grandfather of Dost Mohammed Khan, was son of Usaf, son of Yaru, son of Mohammed, son of Omar Khan, son of Khizar Khan, son of Ismail, son of Nek, son of Daru, son of Saifal, son of Barak, the second son of Abdal. Tradition says that through successive generations Abdal descended from the Israelitish household; but to speak the truth, the origin of the Afghans is so obscure, that no one, even among the oldest and most clever of the tribe, can give satisfactory information on this point. Some of the Afghans, recognising their descent from the children of Israel, feel ashamed of their being related by blood to the Jews, upon whom they look as infidels. Concerning the obscurity of the true descent of the Afghans, if curi-

osity induces any one to desire to know more on that difficult subject, I can safely refer to and justly quote from the highly esteemed book by the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone. "After this cursory notice of the facts relating to the Afghans which are ascertained by authentic history, we may now examine what they say of themselves. The account they give of their own origin is worthy of attention, and has already attracted the notice of an eminent Orientalist. They maintain that they are descended from Afghan, the son of Irmia, or Berkia, son of Saul, king of Israel, and all their histories of their nation begin with relating the transactions of the Jews from Abraham down to the captivity. Their narrative of those transactions appears to agree with that of the other Mohammedans; and though interspersed with some wild fables, does not essentially differ from the Scripture. After the captivity (they allege that) part of the children of Afghan withdrew to the mountains of Ghore, and part to the neighbourhood of Mecca, in Arabia.

"So far this account is destitute of probability. It is known that ten of the twelve tribes remained in the East after the return of their brethren to

Judea, and the supposition that the Afghans are their descendants explains easily the disappearance of the one people and the appearance of the other. The rest of the story is confirmed by the fact that the Jews were very numerous in Arabia at the time of Mohammed, and the principal division of them bore the appellation of Khyber, which is still a district in Afghanistan, if not of an Afghan tribe. The theory is plausible, and may be true; but when closely examined, it will appear to rest on a vague tradition alone; and even that tradition is clouded with many inconsistencies and contradictions.

"The Afghan historians proceed to relate that the children of Israel, both in Ghore and in Arabia, preserved their knowledge of the unity of God and the purity of their religious belief, and that on the appearance of the last and greatest of the prophets (Mohammed) the Afghans of Ghore listened to the invitation of their Arabian brethren, the chief of whom was Khauled (or Caled), son of Waleed, so famous for his conquest of Syria, and marched to the aid of the true faith, under the command of Kyse, afterwards surnamed Abdoolresheed. The Arabian historians, on the contrary, bring the descent

of Khauled from a well known tribe of their own nation, omit the name of Kyse on their list of the prophets, companions, or allies,* and are entirely silent on the subject of the Afghan succours. Even the Afghan historians, although they describe their countrymen as a numerous people during their Arabian campaign, and though it appears from a sarcasm attributed by those historians to the Prophet (who declared Pushtoo to be the language of hell), that they already spoke their national and peculiar tongue, yet do not scruple in another place to derive the whole nation from the loins of the very Kyse who commanded during the period of the above-mentioned transactions.

"If any other argument were required to disprove this part of the history, it is furnished by the Afghan historians themselves, who state that Saul was the forty-fifth in descent from Abraham, and Kyse the thirty-seventh from Saul. The first of these genealogies is utterly inconsistent with those of the Sacred Writings, and the second allows only thirty-seven generations for a period of sixteen hundred

* Ansaur, "Assisters."

years.* If to these facts we add that Saul had no son named either Irmia or Berkia, and that if the existence of his grandson Afghan be admitted, no trace of that patriarch's name remains among his descendants; and if we consider the easy faith with which all rude nations receive accounts favourable to their own antiquity, I fear we must class the descent of the Afghans from the Jews with that of the Romans and the British from the Trojans, and that of the Irish from the Milesians or Bramins." †

* This number is from the Taureekhee Sher Shaubee. The Taureekhee-Morussa give a much greater number, but then it introduces forty-five generations between Abraham and Jacob.

† This subject is briefly discussed by Sir William Jones, in a note on a translation by Mr. Vansittart (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. ii., Art. 4). That elegant scholar is inclined to believe this supposed descent, which he strengthens by four reasons. His first argument is drawn from the resemblance of the name of Hazaureh to Arsareth, the country whither the Jews are said by Esdras to have retired; but this reasoning, which was never very satisfactory, is destroyed by the fact that the Hazaurehs are a nation who have but recently occupied and given their name to a part of Afghanistan. The second argument is built on the traditions examined in the text, and on the assertion of the Persian historians, probably derived from those traditions, and at no time very deserving of faith. The third is founded on the Jewish names of the Afghans; but those they probably have derived from the Arabs, like all other Mohammedan nations. Their ancient names have no resemblance to those of the Jews.

It must be borne in mind that the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone's mission terminated at

The last argument is founded on a supposed resemblance between the Pushtoo and Chaldaic languages, of which the reader will hereafter be enabled to judge. Many points of resemblance between the manners of the Afghans and those of the Jews might be adduced, but such a similarity is usual between nations in the same stage of society; and if it were admitted as a proof of identity, the Tartars and the Arabs, the Germans and the Russians, might be proved the same.

It is also maintained by more than one European writer, that the Afghans are a Caucasian tribe, and particularly that they are descended from the Armenians. In the extent sometimes allowed to the name of Caucasus, the Afghans still inhabit that celebrated mountain; but if it be meant that they ever lived to the west of the Caspian Sea, the assertion appears to be unsupported by proof. Their Armenian descent is utterly unknown to themselves, though constantly in the mouths of the Armenians; and the story told by the latter people of the Afghans having become Mussulmans to avoid the long fasts prescribed by their own church, is too inconsistent with history to deserve a moment's consideration. I may add, that I have compared a short Armenian vocabulary with the Pushtoo, and could perceive no resemblance between the languages; and I once read a good deal of a Pushtoo vocabulary to a well-informed Armenian, who, though he strenuously asserted the descent of the Afghans from his countrymen, yet owned that he could not discover a word common to their language and his own. I have not had the same advantage with the language of other Caucasian tribes; but I compared about two hundred and fifty Georgian words with the corresponding ones in Pushtoo, and nothing could be more different; and I know no ground for connecting the Afghans with

Peshavar, and that he was never himself in Kabul. But the information given in his account of that

the Western Caucasus, except the assertion of a German traveller, whose name I forget, that he saw Afghans there during the last century, which proves too much.

Ferishta mentions that Kyse, the son of Haushem, and Huneef, the son of Kyse, were two of the earliest Arab commanders in Khorassaun (Briggs, Ferishta, vol. i., p. 3). He also states that Khauled, son of Abdoollah, being afraid to return to Arabia, settled in the hills of Solimaun, and gave his daughter to a converted Afghan chief (p. 5). It was probably from these facts that the names of Kyse and Khauled were suggested to the Afghan author, who first thought of ennobling his nation by connecting it with that of the Prophet.

I may here notice, that none of the ancient Afghan names bear the slightest resemblance to those of the Arabs or the Jews. The progenitors of four great divisions of the nation were Serrabun, Ghoorghoosht, Betnee, and Kurleh or Kuranee. The tribes immediately sprung from these are Abdal, Ghilzie, Khukhye, Cauker, &c. &c., and it is not till more recent subdivisions that we find Euzofzyes, Mahommedzyes, Solimaun Khail, and other Arabic and Hebrew derivatives. Professor Dorn, of Kharkov, who has translated a history of the Afghans, and has added many learned notes, discusses severally the theories that have been maintained of the descent of the Afghans: first, from the Copts; second, the Jews; third, the Georgians; fourth, the Toolks; fifth, the Moguls; sixth, the Armenians; and mentions more cursorily the opinions that they are descended from the Indo-Scythians, Medians, Sogdians, Persians, and Indians: on considering all which he comes to the rational conclusion that they cannot be traced to any tribe or country beyond their present seats and the adjoining mountains. 1838.

kingdom, as well as its immediate neighbourhood and more distant dominions, is so correct, and everything is described in such a manner, that all readers would at once think the honourable gentleman had himself been in the capital, had traversed the whole country, and examined all its wonders personally. Above all, his sojourn in Peshavar, while negotiating with the late Shah Shuja, his constant communication, directly and indirectly, with the people of all ranks, and his civil and liberal manners towards every one, created a most wonderful and noble reversion of respect for the generosity, truth, and justice of the British nation in the hearts of the inhabitants of that part of Asia, and on this account all European travellers have been well treated, and many of the Afghan chiefs offered their homage to Lord Keane when advancing upon Cabul. This high-minded gentleman describes the Barakzais, the tribe of Dost Mohammed Khan, as follows:—"The next clan to the Populzye, which it far exceeds in numbers, is the Baurekzyes. This great clan inhabits the country south of Candahar, the valley of Urghessaun, the banks of the Helmud, and the dry plains which that river divides. Those near Can-

ROYAL ASIATIC
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE

dahar, and many of those in Urghessaun and on the Helmud, are led by the fertility of their soil to agriculture, and the industry of others has even produced caureezes and cultivation in the midst of the desert, but the greater part of the tribe is composed of shepherds. They are a spirited and warlike clan, and as Fatah Khan is now their chief, they make a much more conspicuous figure than any other tribe among the Afghans. At present the grand vizier and almost all the great officers of state are Baurekzyes, and they owe their elevation to the courage and attachment of their clan.

"Their numbers are not less than thirty thousand families."

Let us return to Haji Jamal Khan, son of Usaf. In the reign of Ahmad Shah Durrani, Haji Jamal Khan, the grandfather of Dost Mohammed, became a noble of great influence; and when Taimur Shah ascended the throne of Afghanistan, he died, and left four sons, namely: Rahimdad Khan, Payandah Khan, Harun Khan, and Bahadar Khan. His Majesty made the first of these chief of the Barakzai tribe, in the room of his father Haji Jamal. But he possessed a mean disposition, which induced

all the tribe to stand against him; and they complained to the king that the chief, Rahimdad Khan, having a bad temper, does not invite his equals and followers to his table, and never dines in the company of the nobles, but alone in the house. Such conduct is disgraceful to the name of their chief, and therefore they are not willing to render him homage.

His Majesty accepted the appeal of the tribe, dismissed Rahimdad Khan from the chiefship, and appointed him keeper of the Government papers. He left eight sons, Abdul Khan, Abdulmajid, Abdul Kabir, Abdul Salem, Abdulhakim, Abdulhamid, Abdullah, and Abdul vahid Khan.

On the dismissal or death of Rahimdad Khan, Taimur Shah nominated Payandah Khan, the father of Dost Mohammed, as chief of the Barakzai tribe. His civil and liberal conduct towards the people made him popular. His fidelity and attachment to the state rendered him the favourite of the king.

Meanwhile Sardar Madad Khan set out to punish the obstinacy of Azad Khan, the governor of Kashmir; and Payandah Khan, the father of Dost Mohammed, embraced this favourable opportunity

of distinguishing himself, and accompanied the Sardar on his expedition. He fought bravely with the governor, who was routed and subjugated. When the Sardar returned from Kashmir to Kabul, and waited upon the king, he mentioned the services of Payandah Khan with the highest praise. Having had previously a good opinion of this individual, and hearing now of his brilliant achievements at Kashmir, his Majesty ordered him to proceed to Shal and Quetta, and to collect the revenue of those districts. He performed this duty to the advantage of the state, and satisfaction of the populace. On this occasion every one spoke highly of the talents of Payandah Khan.

These successive and good services of Payandah Khan wrought upon the heart of the king, who not only rewarded him by adding the Ghilzai division to his flag, but also allowed him to stand near the throne, and thus his promotion was advancing continually.

In the meantime Prince Abbas, son of Taimur Shah, rebelled against his father, and Arsalan Khan Momand became his adherent. His Majesty ordered Payandah Khan to quell this disturbance. He

marched at the head of an army, and on reaching Lalpurah he rode his horse through the river without fear of being drowned. His followers imitated the heroic conduct of their leader, and found themselves on the other side of the river without any loss. Arsalan Khan, having no power of opposing him, was obliged to fly. Payandah Khan, after gaining the victory, returned to the presence of the Shah.

The Shah, agreeably to the advice of Payandah Khan, went off for Peshavar; and he also accompanied the royal camp. On reaching the city, Arsalan Khan was summoned to appear, and was put to death in the court. The rebellious son, Prince Abbas, threw himself on the mercy of his father, the Shah, and after obtaining pardon for his misdemeanour, came back to Kabul with the king. His Majesty was so much pleased with the valuable services rendered by Payandah Khan that he honoured him with the title of Sarfraz (Lofty) Khan.

After some time the peace of the western frontier of Kabul was disturbed by the Ozbek tribe. This disturbance frightened the king to such a degree that he had determined to quit the capital and

escape to Herat. On hearing of such a cowardly purpose in his Majesty, the father of Dost Mohammed Khan, who was entitled Sarfraz Khan, with his usual resolution and fidelity, persuaded the Shah to remain on the throne, and himself marched towards Balkh. In the exercise of his sagacity and sound wisdom, he made peace with the Ozbek chief, and returned to Kabul without having occasion to use his sword. The favour of the king increased daily towards him, but unfortunately his Majesty expired after a short interval.

On the death of Taimur Shah some of the Durranis were anxious to place Prince Abbas on the throne, and others wished that Mahmud should succeed him. In short, every chief was puzzled to determine on whose head the crown should be placed. Sarfraz Khan, however, gave the sceptre of the realm into the hands of Prince Zaman, afterwards called Shah Zaman. His Majesty therefore loved him as dearly as his own life, and daily bestowed upon him fresh marks of royal distinction.

The continued services of Sarfraz Khan made Shah Zaman so much attached to him that in addition to the command of the Barakzai tribe, and the

division of the Ghilzais, his Majesty attached part of the Qizalbash force to his detachment, and appointed for him an annual salary of about eighty thousand rupees. How pleasing it would have been if Sarfraz Khan had lived to see the divine favour shown in behalf of his son Dost Mohammed Khan, who ascended the throne of the late Kabul kings, and employed many people equal in rank with his father! Nay, also his old uncles, the brothers of Sarfraz Khan, as Jabbar Khan, Mohammed Zaman Khan, and Usman Khan, acknowledged their young nephew as their superior, and received from him a higher salary than Sarfraz Khan got from the old king of Kabul.

As soon as Dost Mohammed Khan gained distinction, and became chief of Kabul, he stamped the following verse on the coin, and this honoured and gave permanence to the name of his affectionate father:—

"Simo tila be shams o qamar medahad naved."
"Vaq te ravaj Sikhai Payandah Khan rasid."

"Silver and gold give the happy tidings to sun and moon that the time has arrived for the currency of Payandah Khan's coin."

It would certainly be wonderful if Sarfraz Khan

could hear with his own ears that his enterprising son Dost Mohammed had become as celebrated as one of the kings, and that the ambassadors of the British, the Russian, the Persian, and the Turkistan governments waited in his court. It happens seldom in this sad and changing world that parents are alive to derive pleasure from the prosperity of their promising sons; and if they ever happen to be alive, still when the child has gained dignity, it is to be regretted that he seldom pleases them entirely by performing his filial duties according to their expectation.

When Vafadar Khan became the minister of Shah Zaman, he gained the highest favour of his Majesty by the use of his sweet words and intrigues in the court. Afterwards by his hypocrisy and false accusations he induced the king to treat all the nobles with contempt, and to look upon them with distrust; and prevailed on his Majesty to make him prime minister of the kingdom. When he was sure that Shah Zaman had become disgusted with his deceit with regard to the chiefs, he represented to the king that Sarfraz Khan was intriguing with Shah Shuja,

with the view to dethrone his Majesty, and make Shah Shuja sovereign of Afghanistan. He added the names of some other chiefs as his adherents in this act of disloyalty. Shah Zaman, who was afterwards blind of both eyes, seemed blind of sense at this time, for as soon as he heard the false accusations of Vafadar Khan, he sent for Sarfraz Khan and put him to death without making any investigation into the facts or circumstances of the alleged treason. The envious conduct of Vafadar Khan did not cease upon accomplishing the murder of Dost Mohammed Khan's father, Sarfraz Khan. This was followed by that of other chiefs also, namely: of Mohammed Azim Khan Alakozai, of Qamruddin Khan, of Amin-ul-mulk babri, of Hazar Khan Ghilzai, of Amir Arsalan Khan, of Jafar Khan Javan Sher, of Zaman Khan Rekabashi, &c., who all fell victims to the envy of Vafadar Khan.

After the unjust massacre of the above named nobles, there remained not a talented and qualified man who could manage the affairs of the realm, and govern to the satisfaction of the people of all ranks. In short, the behaviour of the minister, Vafadar, was

offensive to all. He oppressed the subjects, and he paid the forces in soap and red colours, instead of money; he made also many deductions in their pay, which at length caused every one to be thirsty for his blood; and at length this was shed most ignominiously.

When Sarfraz Khan was murdered, Harun Khan acted as governor of the district of Girashk for him. The latter died, and left two sons, namely, Shah Savar Khan and Amardin Khan. His brother, Bahadar Khan, was a man of much piety, and shunned all worldly affairs. He was day and night engaged in prayers. The ladies of the household of Sarfraz Khan mentioned that when he was in deep contemplation of the Almighty God, a heavy gold chain was generally coming out from his mouth and going into it again. He was said to be a stranger to the stratagems of the Afghans, and a lover of God. His son, Mohammed Rahim Khan, entitled Amin-ul-mulk, was also known to abhor the tyrannical habits of the Afghans, and by his amiable disposition had added honour to the good name of his father. He married a lady of Kashmir, whose virtues, love

of her husband, and good conduct in the days of adversity, are worthy of my notice. I will mention them more fully in the proper place, and especially concerning her being forced to marry Dost Mohammed Khan when she was a widow.

CHAPTER II.

Brothers of Dost Mohammed Khan—Dost's early training—Shah Zaman—Dost becomes the confidential agent of Fatah Khan—Defeat of Shah Shuja—Youth of Dost Mohammed Khan—He returns to Kabul—His sister married to Shah Shuja—Fatah Khan's treaty with Mukhtar and with Qaisar—Intrepidity of Dost—He and Fatah leave Qandhar—They rebel from Shah Shuja—Are compelled to return to Qandhar—Fatah Khan is confined, and Dost escapes—Dost besieges Qandhar—Fatah is released—Dost and Fatah join Kam Ran—Dost gains a victory—Fights with Shuja—Makes peace, and allies himself with Shuja—Dost and his brother desert the camp—Shuja gains a victory—Measures of Dost—His bravery—He defeats his enemy—Shah Mahmud becomes king, Fatah Khan vizir, and Dost is dignified—Mirza Ali Khan—Mohammed Azim Khan—Dost is made Sardar—Expedition to Kashmir—Rebellion in Kabul—Suppressed—War with the Sikhs.

When the Sarfraz Khan was murdered he left twenty-one sons and several daughters. If I did not mention that they had different mothers, it might puzzle the reader to consider that so many children were born from one mother. The celebrated Vazir Fatah Khan, afterwards entitled Shah Dost by Mahmud Shah, was the eldest son of Sarfraz Khan. He, Tai-

mur Quli Khan, and Mohammed Azim Khan were brothers from one mother, who belonged to the Nusrat Khail clan. Then Navabs Asad Khan, Samad Khan, and Turrahbaz Khan were born from the Barakzai mother. The seventh son of the Sarfraz Khan was Ata Mohammed Khan, who was the real brother of Yar Mohammed Khan, of Sultan Mohammed Khan, of Said Mohammed Khan, and of Pir Mohammed Khan. Their mother was from the Alakozai family. Purdil Khan, who was the twelfth son of the Sarfraz Khan, was brother to Sherdil, to Kohindil, and to Mehardil Khan. These descended from their mother of the Idu Khail clan of the Hutak Ghilzai. The well known Navab Jabbar Khan is said to be the seventeenth son of the Sarfraz, and is the only one from his mother, of whom mention is made in the book of Mr. Vigne.* The reputation

* "The Nawab Jubar Khan well deserves the name of the Feringis friend, was then about fifty-five years old, to judge from his appearance, standing about five feet nine, with a corpulent person, dark aquiline features, and somewhat of a Jewish look, having a very good tempered expression. His mother was a slave girl in the Zunana of Poyundu Khan; his father gave her in marriage to a water-carrier, but still continued his attentions to her. By the custom of these countries a servant marrying a slave becomes also a slave. When the Nawab was born the

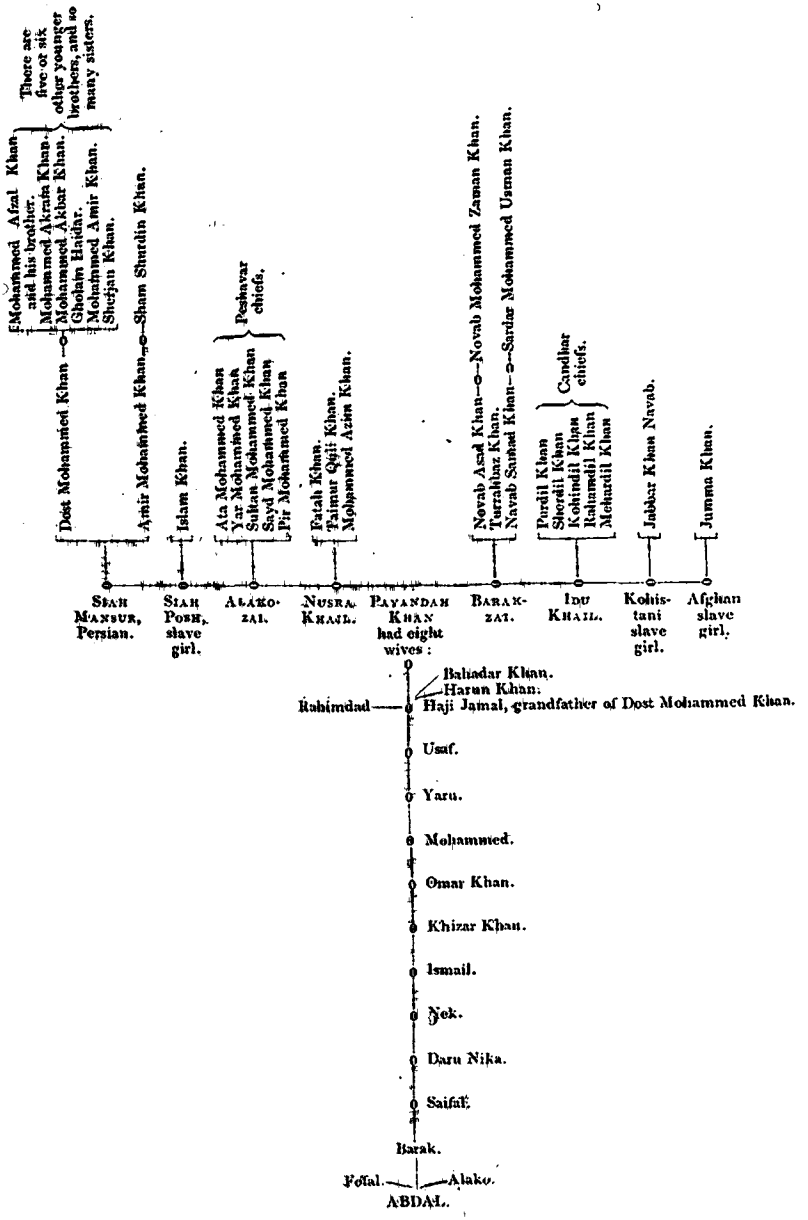
of her character stands now high. Jumma Khan was born from an Afghan slave girl. Aslam Khan's mother was also a slave of the tribe of Kafar Siah-posh. The hero of my tale, Dost Mohammed Khan, was the twentieth, and his younger brother, Amir Mohammed Khan, was the twenty-first son of the Sarfraz Khan; their mother being from the Siah Mansur family, a branch of the Persian tribe, which was looked upon with disgrace and contempt, by the others, the Afghan wives of the Sarfraz Khan.

I must safely say that the mother of Dost Mohammed was the favourite wife of Sarfraz Khan. She accompanied him in the various campaigns, and would not allow him to rise early and march long after sunrise. For this she was blessed by the troops and camp followers, who did not like to start earlier in cold.

When the Sarfraz was no more, Fatah Khan, with the sons of his own uncles, namely, Abdul Sa-

waterman took the child to Poyundu Khan, and told him that he knew more about the child than he himself did. For many years the Nawab was running about the Bala Hissar of Kabul, and was called the waterman's son. Mohamed Azim Khan took notice of him, owned him as his brother, and procured him an appointment as governor of Dhera Ghaze Khan."

PEDIGREE OF DOST MOHAMMED.



Tradition says that the eighteenth descendant of Israel was Abdal.

lam, Abdul Vahid, Mohammed Rahim Khan Amin-ul-mulk, and two other confidential men, made their escape through one of the bulwarks of the city of Qandhar to Girishk, and took up their abode in the fort named Sadat. After a short stay in that place, he went through Sistan to Persia, and joined Mahmud Shah in Kirman, whither he had fled through fear of Zaman Shah. These were the days in which the descendants and family of Payandah Khan suffered most miserably. They were begging from morning till night for pieces of bread. Many were prisoners, and others had taken shelter in the mausoleum of the late Ahmad Shah, with the view of gaining food which was daily distributed for charity's sake. No doubt my hero was included in the company and shared their miseries.

Abdul Majid Khan, son of the uncle of Dost Mohammed Khan, asserting his claim, after the Afghan custom, to inherit the widow of the nearest relation, forced the widowed mother of the latter to marry him. His brother Abdulamin Khan married the sister of Dost Mohammed Khan in the same forcible manner. While these unfortunate events were taking place in the family of the Sarfraz Khan,

Dost Mahommed Khan, with his younger brother Amir Mohammed Khan, lived four years in one of the forts of Maruf, which belonged to the new husband of his mother, called Abdulmajid Khan. At this time he was from seven to eight years of age.

Meanwhile Fatah Khan returned with Mahmud Shah from Persia, and encamped in the village of Amirbaldan, situated in the vicinity of Sistan. In this place he met with Mirakhor, who was one of the chiefs of Shah Zaman, and governor of Qandhar. The Mirakhor, without gaining any information of the strength of Fatah Khan's force, was overawed by the reputation of his rival's celebrated bravery, and was compelled to flee, leaving his tents and camp equipage in possession of Mahmud Shah. Now the stars of the descendants of the Sarfraz began to shine.

Fatah Khan, with Mahmud Shah, marched from Sistan and came to Girashk with pleasant spirits. Here he sent for his servant, named Mohammed, and gave his young brothers, Dost Mohammed and Amir Mohammed, into his charge, with injunctions to take very great care of them, and especially of

the former. He also fixed a handsome income for the maintenance of his enterprising brother.

After doing good offices for the improvement of Dost Mohammed Khan, Fatah Khan, and Shah, Mahmud marched against Qandhar and laid siege to the city. While the siege and skirmishes were going on, Yayha Khan Barakzai fled from the town and joined Fatah Khan. The latter, after forty-two days' blockading, made numerous ladders and took Qandhar by escalade. Immediately after this he confined the Prince Haidar in the palace along with Yar Mohammed Khan, &c. &c., the chiefs of Shah Zaman's party. Fatah Khan asked Mahmud Shah to put Abdulrahim Khan Sadozai and his father to death, and to publish that the deed was done by the Durrani chiefs. By fabricating this story, Fatah Khan was anxious to excite the suspicion of Shah Zaman against the Durranis, and to form an attachment to himself and to Shah Mahmud. Any one who was reported to have a little wealth became a prey to Fatah Khan's extortion. He, as well as Mahmud Shah, hoarded up a great deal of money by oppressing the merchants and cultivators, who provided them with all supplies for the war. When

fully prepared, they moved from Qandhar with arms towards Kabul to meet Shah Zaman.

At this time Dost Mohammed Khan had reached the twelfth year of his age. He obtained a situation under his brother Fatah, and attended upon him as "abdar," water-bearer, on every occasion. After some time he got an additional service, that of having the charge of preparing the smoking-pipe for Fatah Khan.

When Shah Zaman had intelligence of the movement of Mahmud Shah and Fatah Khan in the direction of Kabul, he left all the heavy and royal baggage in charge of Shah Shuja, and marched himself lightly equipped to oppose the enemy. On arriving at Mokar he inspected his army, and he found it consisted of nearly forty thousand foot and horsemen. Ahmad Khan Nurzai, who had one thousand horse under his command, was appointed to form the advance guard of the army. This commander made rapid intrigues with Fatah Khan, deserted Shah Zaman, and offered his services to Mahmud Shah. When this news reached Shah Zaman, he thought that all his chiefs and forces had become disgusted with him through the ill behaviour

of his minister, Vafadar Khan,* and, instead of fighting for him, they would probably seize and deliver him up to the enemy. Already overcome by this fear, he was himself routed without a moment's opposition. On escaping from before Mahmud Shah's camp, his Majesty was informed that the inhabitants of Kabul had placed themselves on the road to this city, with the intention to plunder his Majesty. With this fearful view he took a different route to go down to Jalalabad, and thence to Peshavar. For the purpose of passing the night he stopped in the fort of Ashaq, who, having learned the deplorable flight and condition of the Shah, lost no time in receiving the person of his Majesty, and by express conveyed a report of the same to Mahmud Shah and Fatah Khan. They immediately dispatched Navab Asad Khan with directions to bring Shah Zaman

* Mohammed Osman Khan, the son of this unwise Vafadar Khan, was entitled Nazamuddaulah by the influence of the late Sir William Macnaghten and Sir Alexander Burnes, and was made minister of the late Shah Shuja in Kabul. This person imitated his father, and suggested such imprudent measures to the newly arrived functionary as caused disturbances, the loss of thousands of lives, honour, and also of Afghanistan. For particulars of the character of Vafadar Khan, see Major Hugh's 'Campaign in Afghanistan,' p. 378-9.

and his minister both as prisoners. He reached the fort of Ashaq, and brought the captives from thence to Jagdalak. Here he blinded Shah Zaman, and Vafadar Khan was put to death along with his brother in the Bala Hissar of Kabul.

Much has been said and known about the celebrated diamond of Kohi Nur (mountain of light), wherefore on this subject I add nothing more than that Shah Zaman, before he was taken captive, concealed it in the wall of the tower where he lived in the fort of Ashaq. He did not point out the place of its concealment to Shah Mahmud, but to his brother, Shah Shuja. When the latter ascended the throne he took out the precious diamond, and when his evil stars predominated he was deprived of it by force by Ranjit Singh.* This Lion of the Panjab, Naunelal Singh ("Hotspur"), and poor Sher Singh, tied that diamond on their arms on happy occasions. When the latter was murdered, and anarchy took deep root in Lahaur, Rajah Hira Singh, the late minister of Maharajah Dalip Singh, got possession of the diamond, and sent it to his father's stronghold in the Jammu Hills, where, no doubt, the

* Died in 1839.

present rajáh, Golab Singh, has it in his possession. Rajah Hira Singh had also murdered Missar Beli Ram, the keeper of it, for fear of his saying that it has been received and sent by him to Golab Singh. Now if any inquiry be made with regard to this valuable gem, the Rajah will say he cannot find it, because it was in the charge of Beli Ram, who is now no more.

When the reign of Shah Zaman was at an end, Fatah Khan placed Mahmud Shah on the throne of Kabul, and admitted Dost Mohammed Khan into all the secrets of each party. This promising young man was in attendance upon him at all times, and never went to sleep till Fatah was gone to his bed. He stood before him all the day with his hands closed, a token of respect among the Afghans. It was not an unusual occurrence, that when Fatah Khan was in his sleeping-room, Dost Mohammed Khan stood watching his safety.

After some time had passed, Shah Shuja prepared an army to proceed against Mahmud Shah and Fatah Khan at Kabul, and to revenge the outrage done by them to his brother Shah Zaman. On hearing this, Fatah Khan and Prince Kam Ran, son

of Mahmud Shah, quitted Kabul to check him. Near the village of Ishpan the armies fought with each other. In the beginning of the battle the warriors of Fatah Khan became dispirited, but at length Shah Shuja was routed and overcome. Whatever royal property and treasures were left to him by the late kings fell into the hands of the followers of Fatah Khan, and many of them were very much enriched. Shah Shuja fled, and the Vazir Fatah Khan, flushed with success, went down to Peshavar for the purpose of collecting the revenue of that place. At this time Mahmud Shah had very little force in Kabul, which induced Abdulrahim Khan Ghilzai to make the Logar people his partizans, and to rebel against his Majesty. He set out for Kabul, and the king, being alarmed, released Mukhtar-uddaulah, Ahmad Khan Nurzai, and Akram Khan Ghilzai from custody, and sent them to oppose the refractory chief. These chiefs collected about three thousand men, while the enemy was at the head of twenty thousand horse and foot. A hard fight ensued between the Ghilzai rebels and the Durranis of the king, who lost Taj Mohammed Khan, Akram Khan Ghilzai, and Sher Mohammed Khan, who

had much influence in the kingdom. Finally the Durranis were victorious: and the rebels, after losing numerous followers, retired to their native villages. The heads of the dead were cut off and brought by the Durranis into the presence of Mahmud Shah. He ordered them to be heaped up outside the palace, on the cliff known by the name of "Tapaikhaki-balkh."

In the mean time Shahabuddin Tokhi, finding that the city of Qandhar was without troops, collected a large body of forces, and proceeded to take it. Abdul Majid Khan Barakzai, Saidal Khan Alakozai, and Salah Mohammed Khan Ghilzai, quitted the city to oppose the Tokhi chief on the road. The armies fought on "Puli Sangi," where two hundred Durranis and one thousand Ghilzais were killed. It was curious that the army of the king, fighting against rebels at two different places and far from each other, gained two victories in one day and at the same hour.

The Vazir Fatah Khan, in the beginning of spring, appointed Abdul Vahid Khan as governor of Peshavar, and Khojah Mohammed Khan Fofalzai was left with him. Prince Kam Ran and the Vazir Fatah

Khan returned to Kabul and dispatched Mukhtar-ud-daulah and Ahmad Khan Nurzai to strengthen the city of Qandhar. They were also directed by the above-mentioned chief to destroy all the Ghilzai forts which were situated on and in the vicinity of their march. They did the same, and after settling the disturbances of the southern kingdom, they came back to Kabul.

While peace was thus being established on the southern side, a fresh rebellion broke out in the East. "Fatah Khan Babakarzai" took up his residence in the house of the priests of "Ozbin," and besought them to take up his cause. They assembled a large body of plunderers, and with the aid of Jabbar Khail and Ahmadzai tribe, which in all amounted to about forty thousand men, they came with the above-mentioned rebel, and made breastworks near "Munar Chakri" to fight with the king's forces. The Vazir Fatah Khan moved with an army to punish this refractory multitude, which, after a little fighting, was defeated and dispersed. The Vazir cut off nearly one hundred heads of the rebels and brought them into the city. After this he went to collect the revenues of the country of Bannu, and on

his way back was surprised by the arrival of the news that Prince Qaisar of Herat, being unable to wage war with the prince Haji Firoz, had fled, and had sought refuge and aid from the king of Persia; and that after passing some time in that country, he had marched to seize on the city of Qandhar. On this he immediately joined Prince Kam Ran at Qandhar, and marched to check the progress of Qaisar. They met and fought with each other at Kokran, in which place Akram Khan Ghilzai was killed on the part of Kam Ran, and Prince Qaisar was taken prisoner and carried to Kabul.

While Fatah Khan was engaged in suppressing the aforesaid disorders in the kingdom, the enterprising Dost Mohammed Khan was with him. His heroic conduct and persevering energy of mind were very pleasing in the eyes of the Vazir, and were the subject of jealousy of his older and younger brothers. His age at this time was fourteen years. As his intrepidity was the topic of the warrior's conversation, his beauty also rendered him a favourite with the people in those days.

After that time the Vazir Fatah Khan, along with Dost Mohammed Khan, directed his course back to

Kabul. This afforded a favourable opportunity for Shah Shuja at Peshavar, who, finding that the territory of Qandhar was left without forces, proceeded through the Vazir's country to take it if possible. Akram Khan Barakzai, Mohammed Ali Khan, and Mir Akbar were then with his Majesty. No sooner had Fatah Khan and Dost Mohammed Khan heard of the movement of Shah Shuja towards Qandhar, than they set out to assist Prince Kam Ran against his Majesty. When they reached that place they confined Ghafur Khan Barakzai, Saidel Khan Alakozai, and Khojah Mohammed Khan Badozai, believing that they were likely to go over to Shah Shuja. This intelligence alarmed Mukhtar-ud-daulah, who thought that the daily increasing power of Fatah Khan would some day ruin him; and to prevent this evil he excited the Mirvaiz, Khojah Khanji and Sayad Ashraf to take his part.

The seditious Mirvaiz assembled the inhabitants (Sunnis) of Kabul, and on religious pretence excited their animosity against the Kuzilbashes (Shias). He added that Mahmud Shah and Fatah Khan, contrary to their own religion, are protectors of the Shias, the annihilation of which tribe is incumbent

on the Sunnis' faith. As the greater part of the Qizilbash force was advancing with Fatah Khan and Dost Mohammed Khan towards Qandhar, the Mirvaiz, finding their part of the town weakened in its defence, he ordered the Kabul, Kohistan, and Ghilzai people to make a sudden attack on it; and one of the divisions of the Qizilbash fort, occupied by the Khafis, was plundered, and Shah Mahmud besieged in Bala Hissar. At last his Majesty was taken prisoner, and Shah Shuja planted on the throne.

As soon as Fatah Khan was informed of his master's dethronement, he quitted Qandhar immediately with Dost Mohammed Khan, to fight with Shah Shuja in Kabul. About four miles from the city a battle took place between Shah Shuja and Fatah Khan, in which the latter was beaten, and compelled to join Prince Kam Ran at Qandhar. Shah Shuja being victorious returned to Kabul.

As Navab Asad Khan, uncle of Dost, was a prisoner in the Bala Hisar of Kabul, Mukhtar-ud-daulah supplicated his Majesty to release him, and allow him to be his guest. The Shah complied with his request, and Mukhtar-ud-daulah did every honour

to Asad Khan. The Nawab being desirous to destroy all feelings of animosity between the Sadozai and Barakzai family, wished to make matrimonial connexions among them; consequently the sister of Dost Mohammed Khan was married to Shah Shuja. After this his Majesty requested Navab Asad Khan, Gul Mohammed Khan, the brother of Mukhtar-ud-daulah and Dost Mohammed Khan, to go to the Vazir Fatah Khan at Qandhar, and after assuring him of every attention and respect on the part of the king to induce him to relinquish all designs of supporting Mahmud Shah, and to attach himself to Shah Shuja. The latter also made an oath to restore him to the rank and privileges of his late father the Sarfraz Khan, and to treat him with all due consideration. The aforesaid chiefs went down to Qandhar, and delivered the messages of the king to Fatah Khan, who was pleased with this unexpected condescension in Shah Shuja, and immediately marched for Kabul. Prince Kam Ran was broken-hearted at this unhappy turn of affairs, and was obliged to take refuge in Hirat.

When the intelligence of Fatah Khan's departure from Qandhar reached Mukhtar-ud-daulah at Kabul,

he went down to meet him at Ghazni, and conducted him to the presence of the king. Fatah Khan did not receive the favours of his Majesty as stipulated, nor was the Ghilzai division of the army placed under his charge. He was nearly two months in the house of Mukhtar-ud-daulah, who treated him with distinction and civility. In the meantime Akram Khan advised Shah Shuja to proceed to Peshavar, and there to put Fatah Khan and Mukhtar-ud-daulah into custody, and so to save himself from all fear of injury from them. One of the men who was aware of this secret went and said to Mukhtar-ud-daulah that Akram Khan and Shah Shuja had contrived to ruin them. Mukhtar-ud-daulah was lost in wonder at such ungrateful contrivances of Shuja, whom he had shortly before made king, after dethroning Mahmud Shah. He said to himself, that if he were to rebel openly just now, to prevent the ill designs of his antagonist, it would bring a load of disgrace to his own long-earned reputation. He therefore advanced seventy thousand rupees secretly to Fatah Khan, and told him to wait in Kabul on the excuse of procuring a marching equipage, while he himself would go with Shuja to Peshavar. He added also,

that when Fatah Khan should receive the news of the Shah's arrival in Tezin, he should immediately commence proceedings as a foe to the king, and should cause the release of the chiefs, namely: Baqar Khan, Ibrahim Khan, Mirza Abul Qasim Khan, and Mardan Khan, and convey them to Shah Zadah Qaisar at Qandhar. These chiefs were the friends of Shah Mahmud, and therefore had been put into confinement by Shah Shuja. While Mukhtar and Fatah Khan were planning these proceedings against Shah Shuja, they entered into an agreement with each other, that the friends and enemies of the one should be friends and enemies of the other, and both should join when an antagonist appeared against either of them.

No sooner had Shah Shuja reached Tezin on his way to Jalalabad than he heard of the hostile views of Mukhtar and Fatah Khan. Immediately he issued orders that a strong cavalry force should return to Kabul, and bring the captive nobles of Shah Mahmud to his presence, along with the guard already with them. Before this cavalry had reached Kabul the brave Fatah Khan took all the chiefs out of custody, and conducted them to Qandhar, through

Lahogard.* Shah Zadah Qaisar was ruling in Qandhar at that time, and Ahmad Khan Nurzai was his minister. Fatah Khan, after long marches, reached the "Edgah" gate of Qandhar at midnight, and bribed the guard to report his arrival secretly to Agha Idrak, then confidential eunuch of the Shah Zadah. When he heard this he instantly waited upon Qaisar, and mentioned the arrival of Fatah Khan, with this message, "If the Shah Zadah had any intention of becoming a king, this seemed a good opportunity, and he (Fatah Khan) would place him on the throne; otherwise he should send him a quiet and plain answer."

As soon as Qaisar received the overtures of Fatah Khan he came at midnight to meet him at the gate, without being noticed by any one. Fatah Khan said to the prince, that if his royal highness would deliver to him Ahmad Khan Nurzai, and take an oath that he would be gratefully attached to him for ever, he would either shed all his own blood on his behalf, or would make him king of Afghanistan. Otherwise he would go to Hirat, and offer the same assistance to Prince Kam Ran.

* Commonly called Logar.

Shah Zahah Qaisar accepted the good advice of Fatah Khan, and both wrote an agreement on a leaf of the Qoran, under their respective seals, binding themselves to each other with perpetual attachment. When this was settled, Fatah Khan conducted the prince to his palace in the city, and ordered his two thousand horsemen to dismount and proceed under the command of Dost Mohammed Khan, to surround the house, and seize the person of Ahmad Khan Nurzai, by taking the "Char Suq" road. The hero Dost Mohammed Khan succeeded in opening the door of Ahmad Khan's house, and seized him while in bed. After this he tied his hands and feet, and imprisoned him in the house of Shah Zadah Qaisar.

In the morning the courtiers as well as the citizens did not see Ahmad Khan passing to "Darbar" as usual, and were astonished to perceive that in his place Fatah Khah and Dost Mohammed Khan had attended the court of Shah Zadah; and no one knew what had become of the unfortunate Ahmad Khan. This sudden change of the nobility created the utmost terror among the Afghan chiefs, and curiosity among the citizens. The latter proceeded

to see the prisoner in the palace, to satisfy their curiosity; and the former persuaded Qaisar to put Fatah Khan in confinement. On this his royal highness, being forgetful of his solemn oath, made an artifice to seize Fatah Khan, and with this view asked him to give him a private entertainment in the garden, where he secretly made arrangements with the chiefs to shackle him immediately.

However, this fraud of the ungrateful Qaisar came to the knowledge of Fatah Khan, who begged Qaisar to allow him leisure of two days to prepare the articles of the entertainment, while he meant to manage his own defence. At this crisis he found no remedy but to appoint the brave Dost Mohammed Khan superintendent of the feast, and commandant of his personal guard. Consequently, he (Dost) decorated a most beautiful apartment to receive the prince, and being himself armed cap-a-pie, as well as at the head of five hundred good fighting soldiers, stood in the presence of his royal highness, and by his alert manners showed him that he was watching the safety of his brother the Vazir.

When the prince, as well as the Durrani nobility,

observed that their designs of catching Fatah Khan were frustrated by the vigilance of Dost Mohammed Khan, they pretended that the object of the meeting was to obtain the rescue of Ahmad Khan Nurzai. For this they also offered a present of one lakh of rupees to the prince and to the Vazir, on the part of the captive. They also married his daughter to the prince that day. This arrangement caused his release, and his reappointment to the situation of the lieutenant-governor of Qandhar.

Meanwhile Fatah Khan, with Dost Mohammed, Ata Mohammed, and Khowajah Mohammed Khan, proceeded to attack Kabul. When he reached Kaleti Ghilzai he was deserted by Ata Mohammed Khan, and other Nurzai chiefs, who went back and joined Ahmad Khan at Qandhar. Fatah Khan, relying on the intrepidity of Dost Mohammed Khan, cared very little for the faithless conduct of the deserters, and with his heroic brother continued his march towards Kabul. When he arrived at the village named Top, the news of the movement of Shah Shuja from Peshavar, as well as his arrival at Qilai Qazi to oppose him, spread in the camp of the Barakzai chiefs. On this, about midnight, Faizullah

Khan Fofalzai, along with five hundred horsemen, left Fatah and Dost, and joined Shah Shuja.

This desertion caused great consternation in the camp of Fatah Khan, whom Dost wisely advised to retrace his steps to Candhar. Before they reached Kalat they were informed that Prince Kam Ran was in possession of Qandhar, and that Ahmad Khan, the lieutenant-governor, without firing a shot, had stolen his way to his native fort in the adjacent country. As soon as Fatah and Dost heard this they sent Shah Zadah Qaisar in charge of Khowajah Mohammed to Dehlah, and themselves with the rest of their brothers waited upon Prince Kam Ran at Qandhar. They passed about two months in great distress with him, and at last begged him to advance them some money to distribute among their followers. The prince, notwithstanding that he had a great deal of wealth, swore that he had none to give them.

Fatah and Dost took immediate steps to intrigue with their former master, Prince Qaisar, against Prince Kam Ran, whom they, when every thing was in their own favour, turned out of the city; and they then invited the former to take his place. In

these times of agitation Dost failed also in the respect which was due to the royal household, and omitted no opportunity to plunder and rob the royal ladies. After the Shah Zadah Qaisar, with the assistance of Fatah Khan and Dost Mohammed Khan, had seized the government of Qandhar, his royal highness dispatched Mohammed Ali Khan, and Mir Akbar, to Shah Shuja and Mukhtar-ud-daulah, and proposed that if he would allow him the possession of Qandhar, Shikarpur, and their dependencies, he would destroy Kam Ran, with Haji Firozuddin. He also suggested that if his Majesty suspected the attachment of his royal highness, and the fidelity of Fatah Khan and of Dost Mohammed Khan, he would immediately send their brother Mohammed Azim Khan as a hostage to the Shah.

Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk did not accept the offers of Shah Zadah, but continued his march to Qandhar. When the royal camp was near a village called "Chishmah Shadi," Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan fled from the city to Frah, and the Shah Zadah, in company with Khowajah Mohammed Khan, proceeded to take shelter in "Dehlah." This intelligence disappointed his Majesty, who set out

by express to get the Shah Zadah if possible. Mukhtar-ud-daulah secretly conveyed the news to the Shah Zadah, who quitted "Dehlah," to secure himself in some distant and out of the way place.

On this Shah Shuja entered the city of Qandhar, and offered the most kind and honourable treatment to Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, who immediately waited upon him. Four days afterwards Shah Zaman and Mukhtar-ud-daulah went and brought Shah Zadah Qaisar with Khowajah Mohammed Khan into the presence of his Majesty, who pardoned them for their past misdeeds and restored the government of Qandhar to them. Shah Shuja, in company with Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, proceeded to Sindh, where he received the usual tribute from the Meers, and bent his course by the Derajat and Peshavar to Kabul.

Meanwhile the Mir Alam Khan was deprived of the governorship of Derah Ghazi Khan, and Ata Mohammed Khan Nurzai was placed by Shah Shuja in that important situation. This alarmed Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan to such an extent, that they found no safety for their persons but in flying towards Hirat. The Mir Alam also fled at the

head of some good and brave cavalry, and gained employment under Shah Zadah Qaisar in Qandhar. In Hirat Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan did all in their power to induce Shah Zadah Haji Firoz to attack Qandhar and Kabul, but he did not comply with their request. He said he had not ambition to rule the kingdom of Afghanistan, and was well satisfied with the present possession of Hirat.

The refusal of Shah Zadah Haji Firoz broke the hearts of Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, and even compelled them to return to Shah Zadah Qaisar at Qandhar. Here Khowajah Mohammed Khan Fofalzai, with the friendly assistance of the Mir Alam Khan Nurzai, began to insult Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan with dispute about equality, and intrigued with Shah Zaman, who at this time was living with his son Shah Zadah Qaisar in Qandhar, to put them both in confinement.

With this view Shah Zaman begged the confidential servants of Shah Zadah Qaisar, who were the Mir Alam Khan Nurzai and Shah Navaz Khan Achakzai, to call upon Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, and state on the part of his Majesty that they should give him a grand entertainment. The quick-

sighted Dost Mohammed Khan discovered the real object of the pretended familiarity and base affection of Shah Zaman, and both brothers apparently showed themselves highly honoured by such favour of Shah Zaman. They made preparations for three different entertainments; one on their own part, the second from Navab Asad Khan, and the third from Mohammed Azim Khan.

Upon the one hand Fatah Khan was preparing everything pompously to receive Shah Zaman in the beautiful garden of Maranjan, as if he were not aware of the conspiracy, and on the other, the active Dost Mohammed was secretly engaged in adding to the number of his body guard, and kept a piercing eye on all sides to secure the safety of his brother, Fatah Khan, and of himself, in case the conspirators should dare to injure them. His celerity and readiness to meet any blow showed Shah Zaman and Shah Zadah Qaisar the impossibility of making them the victims of the conspiracy, and therefore to remove every suspicion from the minds of Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, the Shah conferred the dress of honour on them. Thus the watchfulness of the hero of my tale frustrated the designs of the

conspirators, who in great despair made all possible schemes to gain their mean object during the day, but availed nothing.

At last Shah Zaman and Shah Zadah Qaisar left the entertainment, and on returning to the palace gave orders that no chief should enter the court-yard accompanied by more than five attendants. During twenty days Fatah Khan managed to take about one hundred men with him, when he was waiting upon Shah Zadah, and thus secured his safety for such a period. At length, the Shah Zadah concealed some of his strong men in his garden, when he gave orders that his nobles should wait to pay their respects. This was done, and suddenly the Mir Alam Khan, the nephew of the Sardar Ahmad Khan, surnamed Saifuddaulah, lifted up Fatah Khan and threw him down on the ground, which broke two of his teeth, and immediately they made him a prisoner. After this the friends of Fatah Khan, namely, Navab Asad Khan, Mirza Mohammed Raza, and Agha Mehndi, were similarly treated; but the brave Dost Mohammed was fortunately aware of the impending danger, and lost no time, but called his followers, who amounted to about five hundred men.

It was not in the power of Shah Zadah to catch Dost Mohammed Khan, when thus protected.

It was impossible for a man like Dost Mohammed Khan to see his brother, Fatah Khan, suffering in custody without using his utmost energy to obtain the freedom of the dear captive. At the head of his followers he made a bold rush into the outer gate of the palace, but on reaching the door of the residence of the Shah Zadah, where Fatah Khan was confined, he was disappointed to observe that it was shut, and not only strongly defended, but all the walls and towers filled with matchlock men. They all at once fired at him, and he, having no means to ascend the walls, relinquished the attack. However, he besieged the palace; on which the Shah Zadah ordered Khowajah Mohammed Khan and the other chiefs to shut the gates of the city, and thus cut off the means of escape from Dost Mohammed Khan when thus reduced in the number of his adherents. One of the friends of Mohammed Azim Khan secretly sent this news to the Dost, and added also that the chiefs, with five hundred men each, had been ordered to take charge of the different gates and towers of the city against him.

On receiving this unpleasant intelligence, which might make to tremble almost the bravest leader, the hero Dost, with his usual perseverance and presence of mind, assembled his brothers and the heads of his small handful of men, with whom he held a council of war. He stated, "that the captivity of his elder brother, Fatah Khan, is of course painful to every one of the present party, and most heart-rending it is to leave him lingering in the hands of the enemy; but as the Shah Zadah has made every preparation either to destroy or to seize this small party, if his royal highness succeeds in either of his plans, we shall not only be sufferers, but shall also lose the hope of securing the liberty of Fatah Khan for ever. Consequently, we must draw our swords, and with energetic determination killing our opposers on the road, force our way through the gates, and go down to Girishk." The party accepted this advice as the best, and gladly followed him who gave it so wisely. On approaching the gate, Dost Mohammed killed some men of the guard stationed to impede his progress; and thus opening the gate made his escape to his stronghold in Girishk. On this, Shah Zaman advised his son, Shah Zadah Qaisar, to

cut off the head of Fatah Khan in return for his being the instrument in blinding his Majesty and forcing him from the throne; but the Shah Zadah lent more attentive ears to the advice of Mukhtar-ud-daulah and Mohammed Khan, than to that of his father, and thus saved the life of his prisoner.

At this time a large caravan from Persia passed through Hirat for Qandhar, and had scarcely reached the vicinity of Girishk, when Dost Mohammed Khan with Mohammed Azim Khan placed himself in its way. When the store of booty was near and in his view, he galloped forward and deprived all the merchants of their goods and cash. He paid no attention to the heart-rending shrieks and complaints of the traders; and being in possession of about four lakhs of rupees, he raised troops, proceeded at the head of them, and laid siege to Qandhar. During nearly three months he surrounded the city so closely that all communication with the garrison was stopped, and the supplies of grain and ammunition were nearly consumed. While Dost Mohammed Khan was daily reducing the Shah Zadah to a dangerous perplexity by a regular and protracted siege, Mukhtar-ud-daulah was also not less active in favour of

Fatah Khan. Shah Zadah Qaisar had much regard for Mukhtar, who sent him a petition begging him to release Fatah Khan, "otherwise his brother, the brave Dost, will destroy the city of Qandhar, and I shall be able to secure no respect for the royal family when captured." He also asked Shah Shuja to write to Shah Zadah to the same effect. The Shah instructed the Shah Zadah that, on releasing Fatah Khan, he was to ask him to send Mohammed Azim Khan, with the Gholam Khanah (Persian troops), to remain as hostages with his Majesty, the Shah Zadah considering this a most lucky opportunity to please Shah Shuja by obeying his orders, and much more so to get rid of the Dost's siege, gave an immediate acquiescence to the request of his Majesty, and set Fatah Khan free, who also sent the demanded hostages to Shuja.

After some time Shah Shuja dispatched Mohammed Azim and Ata Mohammed Khan on special service to Multan, and on their return from that quarter they passed through Deratjat and Peshavar on their way to Qandhar. As soon as they arrived at that place, Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan rebelled from Shah Shuja and Shah Zadah Qaisar,

and declared themselves willing to support Shah Zadah Kam Ran against them. When his Majesty heard this sad news he immediately wrote to Shah Zadah Qaisar to proceed with four thousand horsemen and attack the rebels. Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, having been informed of the hostile steps of Qaisar, solicited Shah Zadah Haji Firoz of Hirat to lend them aid. To this his royal highness agreed, and dispatched Shah Zadah Milak Qaisar at the head of three thousand cavalry to their assistance. It was in the plain near the fort of Azim Khan where the allied forces under the Dost engaged with those of Shah Zadah Qaisar. After a fight, in which about two thousand men were killed and wounded on both sides, the hero of my tale, Dost Mohammed Khan, and his brother, Fatah Khan, were victorious, and the army of Shah Zadah routed.

When the intelligence of the defeat of Shah Zadah reached the Imperial court of Shah Shuja, he proceeded quickly in person to defend the city of Qandhar. On this, Fatah Khan and the Mir Alam Khan made preparations to oppose the progress of his Majesty. Since there was no other person so

qualified as Dost Mohammed Khan, both in conducting political affairs and in the energetic duties of a field-marshal, the whole party unanimously elected the lion of my subject to undertake that important post.

The field-marshal, Dost Mohammed, with his accustomed alacrity and perseverance, led his troops to oppose Shah Shuja, whom he met near Qarahbagh, or rather in Obeh. A battle ensued, and both parties fought desperately, when the Sardar Ahmad Khan Nurzai became the medium of a negotiation between the Shah and Dost Mohammed Khan. War was changed into peace, on which Dost Mohammed returned to Girishk, and Shah Shuja, after replacing Shah Zadah Qaisar in the government of Qandhar, moved back to Kabul with Mukhtar-ud-daulah.

It was not long after the arrival of Shah Shuja in Kabul that his Majesty was surrounded with new difficulties, and thought to have recourse to the services of the brave Dost Mohammed and of Fatah Khan. The affairs of the capital took a most frightful aspect. The prime minister, Mukhtar-ud-daulah, in junction with the celebrated hypocrite, the Mir

Vaiz, the priest of Kabul, rebelled against his royal master, with the view to recognise Shah Zadah Qaisar, governor of Qandhar, as sovereign of Afghanistan. When this cheerless information reached the ears of his Majesty, he immediately sent a deputation consisting of the Durrani nobles of the realm, namely, the Sardar Madad Khan Is-haqzai, Ahmad Khan Nurzai, some members of the royal family, and holy descendant of the Prophet the Sadats, as well as other "Aq Saqal," silver-bearded people of respectability, to Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan in Girishk.

The deputation of the Shah, after engaging and pledging themselves for the personal safety and good treatment of Dost Mohammed and of Fatah Khan, conducted them to Qandhar. As soon as this report spread in the country, Mukhtar-ud-daulah and the Mir Vaiz, as well as their followers, relinquished all their rebellious designs for the time. Shah Shuja felt very anxious to secure the closer alliance of Dost Mohammed and of Fatah Khan, and therefore he himself met them in Qandhar. His Majesty gave them every assurance of his favour and attachment, and delivered to them a sealed engagement written

on the holy leaf of the "Qoran," and at the same time conferred the title of "Sardar i Sardaran" (chief of chiefs) upon Fatah Khan: he also gave a most valuable dress of honour, along with a superior horse with gold trappings, to Dost, and one lakh of rupees for their expenses.

After Shah Shuja had succeeded in obtaining the good will and services of Dost and Fatah Khan, he proceeded to raise tribute from the Meers of Sindh; but the Sindhians made preparations to fight with the Shah. On this the nobles of the court, namely, Akram Khan, &c. &c., petitioned the Shah to make peace on getting five lakhs of rupees from them; while the hero Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan, relying on their intrepidity and sagacity, begged the Shah not to lend an ear to the proposals of Akram, but to leave the whole affair to their arrangement. They also added that, without using arms and sacrificing lives, they would get from the Meers and fill the royal coffers with thirty lakhs of rupees. However, Akram foolishly prevailed on his Majesty to follow his counsel; and going secretly to the Meers at night, brought only five lakhs of rupees, and made an arrangement with them.

This proceeding of Akram Khan, which was nothing but a tissue of folly and crooked understanding, not only showed the weakness of the Shah's powers to the Sindhians and caused a loss of twenty-five lakhs of rupees to the royal treasury, but it also excited the extreme displeasure of Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan. They deeply lamented the damage sustained by the ill counsel of Akram Khan, and became exceedingly wrathful, that the Shah, instead of paying attention to their advantageous advice, followed that of their inferior and fool.

Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan were so much disgusted with the above-mentioned proceedings, that they left Haidarabad and came up to Shikarpur. Hither the Shah followed them and apologized to them. He swore that nothing of the kind should happen in future, and that all the affairs of his government, whether internal or external, should be adjusted by their guidance. As nature had cultivated noble and independent notions in the head and heart of Dost, he therefore could not be estranged by ill usage of this kind, but was determined to oblige and serve the Shah evidently and openly, and agreed to fight with Shah Zadah Qaisar,

Mukhtar-ud-daulah, and Mir Vaiz, who had again assumed the character of enemies to the Shah.

In the mean time the news of the movements of Shah Zadah Qaisar and Mukhtar-ud-daulah towards Peshavar was brought to Shah Shuja, who proceeded with Dost and Fatah Khan to Derah Ghazai Khan, with the intention to strike a blow on the party of Shah Zadah Qaisar at Peshavar. Before the march commenced, the watchful Dost Mohammed directed his and Fatah Khan's family to steal their way to Qandhar, and the Navab Asad Khan was appointed to take charge of them; and he at the same time said that he would soon join them with Fatah Khan.

It should be recollected here that Mukhtar-ud-daulah was always on friendly terms with Fatah Khan and with Dost. He now, being the chief instrument of recognising Shah Zadah Qaisar, against whom Shah Shuja was proceeding, wrote secretly to Dost and to Fatah, that if they still adhere to the bonds of friendship and their oath with him, they are to desert Shah Shuja immediately, and kindle the flame of insurrection in the dominion of his Majesty in Qandhar, which no doubt would agitate and ruin the measures of the Shah beyond remedy. While

Shah Shuja was about six miles from Derah, Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan deserted the royal camp and took their route towards Qandhar. The report of the desertion of Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan thunderstruck Shuja, who, however, relying much more on the protection of God than on the assistance of the deserters, continued his march to Peshavar.

It was near the village of Tahkal, in the suburbs of Peshavar, where the force of Shah Shuja fought with that of Shah Zadan Qaisar. After a severe conflict Mukhtar-ud-daulah fell in the field, and his brother Haji Mir Ahmad and Khowajah Mohammed Khan also followed him. The victory was on the side of Shah Shuja, who at once set out for Kabul and put to death the fanatic ringleader the Mir Vaiz, priest of that city. As soon as his Majesty got rid of the said priest he started to punish Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan at Qandhar, who had deserted him at Derah.

When Dost Mohammed and Fatah were informed of the hostile movements of Shah Shuja, they raised a large army, and under the royal shadow of Shah Mahmud and of Shah Zadah Kam Ran, set out to

oppose Shah Shuja. Dost Mohammed volunteered to be the head of the advanced guard, and was accompanied by his step-brother Purdil Khan, and also by Nur Mohammed Khan, the brother of Khowajah Mohammed Khan, who was slain in the late battle of Tahkal, in Peshavar. The very moment he had reached Kalat i Ghilzai, Nur Mohammed Khan went over to Shah Shuja, and Ata Mohammed Khan Nurzai and Yahya Khan Bamzai, who were commanders of large bodies of troops, fled towards Dehlah and Murghab.

At the time these sad desertions took place, and the leader of the advanced guard remained alone, Shuja would not have hesitated a moment to seize and destroy him (Dost Mohammed) by surprise, but he knew his brave heart and wise head, and therefore avoided a skirmish with him. It is said by the people that at this crisis Dost Mohammed was afraid of Shah Shuja, because he was deserted and alone, and the Shah was afraid of the talents and heroism of Dost, lest he might cause dissension among his followers. These fears, entertained on both sides, prevented an immediate contest, and afforded a favourable opportunity to Dost Mohammed Khan

to retrace his steps and join his brother Fatah Khan.

On the approach of Shuja's army, Mahmud Shah, being aided only by Fatah Khan and Dost Mohammed, found himself too weak to fight with Shah Shuja, and therefore in this low spirit he fled to Girishk.

After some time Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan left Girishk and went to Sabzvar, where they remained for three months. During their sojourn in this place they were informed that Shah Shuja had left Qandhar for Kabul, and appointed Shah Zadah Yunas, with Azam Khan Nasakhchibashi and the Mir Alam Khan, governor of the former city.

Meanwhile Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan heard that two large caravans were to pass near Khashrod, one from Qandhar to Persia, and the other from the latter country to the former. On this they placed themselves on the road of the caravans, and the very moment they encountered with them every article fell into the possession of these noble highwaymen. They gained plenty of money by this plunder from the merchants. Immediately after this they raised an army and prepared themselves to attack Qandhar.

Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan met no opposition on the line of their march to Qandhar, which place they fortunately took with little trouble. The governor of this place fled, and joined his master Shah Shuja in Derajat; and Mir Alam Khan, the lieutenant-governor, being a relative of Pir Mohammed Khan Alakozai, threw himself on the protection of Shah Mahmud, who was again made nominal king by Dost and Fatah. After arranging the government affairs of Qandhar, Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan proceeded to take Kabul, under favour of the name of Shah Mahmud. They succeeded in gaining possession of this capital, and sent Mohammed Azim Khan towards Peshavar to oppose Shah Shuja.

While Mohammed Azim Khan was encamped at Balabagh to intercept the progress of Shah Shuja, Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan were strengthening themselves and weakening their adversaries in Kabul. Among them was the Mir Alam Khan, whom they confined and treated with barbarous cruelty. Shah Shuja, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, proceeded from Peshavar to Kabul. When the royal army reached Jalalabad, Mohammed Azim Khan, finding himself unable to oppose his Majesty,

left the highway and took shelter in the different skirts of the Sufaid Koh.

No sooner had the above-mentioned intelligence reached Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan than they marched down to Surkhab to bring Mahmud Shah with them. These three enterprising men had no more than three thousand soldiers, and knew the strength of the army they were going to fight with; but Dost Mohammed's bravery, mingled with policy, was always depended upon, and generally productive of the results of victory. On their arrival in the vicinity of the Lukhi of Surkhab, they thought that if the Durrani chiefs should cause the release of the Mir Alam Khan, he would probably succeed in joining Shah Shuja, and desertions might take place among the followers on both sides. To prevent this anticipated misfortune, Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan murdered the poor prisoner.

Now Dost Mohammed and Fatah Khan held a council of war with their subordinate chiefs in the presence of Shah Mahmud, and stated that it was most contrary to the rules of policy and of war to appear in the open field with a small force of three thousand before a monarch or enemy of twenty-five

thousand well mounted cavalry and well equipped infantry. The only thing they think now advisable to preserve warlike fame and gain honour is to avoid a general action, and then with determined spirit to attack the enemy by surprise. They also proposed that, until the enemy were perfectly routed, they should not divide themselves into small bodies, and commence to plunder their respective antagonists, as was usual with the Afghans, because this would cause great confusion among them, and probably the enemy would get the benefit of it. They also added that, though the enemy exceeded them in power and number of men, none of them ought to be disheartened and go over to him, believing that the victory would always attend his army, because such conduct would not only cause a disgraceful name for the man himself who should do so, but would also dishearten the rest of their followers.

These counsels of Dost Mohammed Khan were applauded by Mahmud Shah, Fatah Khan, and the chiefs, on which they left everything of peace and war to his sound and wise management. He remained all day concealed in the bushes or "lukhi," and about evening he marched with all his forces.

He made a long march under cover of the darkness of night, and about five in the morning he attacked the Sardar Madad Khan, Azam Khan, and Ghafur Khan, who commanded ten thousand foot and horse, and had been sent as an advanced brigade. Persons who were present in the field of battle told me that it was out of the power of any man's tongue to describe the matchless alacrity, prowess, and steadiness of Dost Mohammed Khan in this grand battle. In one moment he was seen making a havoc in the lines of the enemy, and then, forcing his way back, he was observed to encourage his followers to fight; and another time he was perceived to restore order among the undisciplined soldiers. Madad Khan and Azam Khan, commanding the opposite forces, now felt the narrowness of their situation, and at the same time were panic-struck to see that Dost Mohammed was causing great slaughter in their army, which was already much reduced in number and in power. At length Dost Mohammed Khan routed and dispersed the enemy, who suffered exceedingly both in men and in baggage.

When the report of the defeat of the strong royal force under Madad Khan, &c. &c., by a small body

of troops under the personal command of Dost Mohammed Khan reached the camp of Shah Shuja, it not only incensed his Majesty, but alarmed him much, and made him proceed in person to check the progress of Dost Mohammed Khan. Shah Shuja had still fifteen thousand good soldiers under the command of the celebrated Akram Khan, who made the King believe that Shah Mahmud's forces were only three thousand men, and that they would not stand before him; and also that Dost Mohammed would soon lose the name of victorious, which he lately obtained in consequence of the ill management of Madad Khan. It appears that Akram Khan was either jealous, or had foolish brains to suppose that he could beat an army headed by Dost Mohammed Khan, who was never once known to leave a field of battle without gaining the victory, except some foresighted policy had induced him to do so. However, Shah Shuja made all necessary arrangements for waging war with Mahmud Shah and Fatah Khan, evidently proud of the superiority of his army, yet in heart extremely fearful of the energies of Dost Mohammed Khan. I heard from several credible people in Afghanistan that at this time of the war Shah Shuja

said confidentially to his minister, that while Dost Mohammed is not captured, the victory is not to be expected; and while he is alive the crown will not be on his (Shuja's) head.* The forces on both sides were arrayed in the field, those of Shah Shuja commanded by the Sardar Akram Khan, and those of Shah Mahmud were guided by the personal and heroic directions of Dost Mohammed Khan. A battle ensued, and after a severe conflict the Sardar Akram Khan was killed, with many hundreds of Shuja's army. Some say that the deceased was cut down by Dost himself; and others add that he had received a ball from some of his own followers. The fall of such a high nobleman in the field, with so many hundred followers, produced an alarming feeling in the forces of Shuja. His Majesty was also himself frightened, and at last compelled to flee. All the rest of his followers also dispersed.

Shah Mahmud and Fatah Khan, happy in their success, and proud of the victory gained by their brave adherent Dost Mohammed Khan, returned to Kabul, and Mahmud was placed on the throne and acknowledged as King of Afghanistan. Fatah Khan,

* This appears to be a wonderful and true prophecy.

the elder brother of Dost Mohammed Khan, was appointed prime minister of the Shah, and he gave the charge of various important situations to his brothers. Since the qualifications for conducting war, unshaken courage and persevering generalship, as well as the talents for administering the affairs of the realm, prudent foresight and sound policy, were shining on the forehead of Dost Mohammed Khan, Mahmud Shah and the Vizir considered his presence with themselves of much value, and consequently he was selected as next person to the Vazir, but in reality he was first in everything.

The Vazir desired Mohammed Azim Khan to go with Shah Zadah Kam Ran, and take Peshavar, and he (Azim) therefore sent Jabbar Khan, with his secretary, Mirza Ali Khan, to collect the revenue of Derah Ghazi Khan. As the secretary possessed high talents for arranging the affairs of government, he was summoned by Mohammed Azim Khan, who desired him to take charge of every thing under him. Being a native of the civilized part of Persia, and a deep politician, his conduct and kind disposition obtained the praise of almost every man in the country. His credit and

word were so much respected by the wealthy merchants that he was able to raise six lakhs of rupees in one day, which had never formerly been done by any one. He had full information of almost every thing in Afghanistan, and gained the highest favour of Mohammed Azim Khan, for whom he collected a great deal of wealth, and also caused every body to look upon him as the first noble in Afghanistan. This, however, excited great hatred against himself, especially that of Dost Mohammed and the rest of his brothers. They secretly said to the Vazir Fatah Khan that the intention of Mirza Ali Khan is to strengthen the power of his immediate master, Mohammed Azim Khan, to make you and every one of your brothers dependent upon him; and that the time is not distant when we may all be reduced to bondage under him. On this the Vazir Fatah Khan sent for Mirza Ali Khan, and requested him to get three lakhs of rupees for him from his master, as he intended to go to Kashmir. The Mirza delivered the message to Mohammed Azim, but got no satisfactory reply. He told him the same again, and even went so far in his conversation with Mohammed Azim Khan as to say that if he would not

give the demanded sum quickly to the Vazir, he would bring himself into much difficulty. He then agreed to pay the sum next day.

Mirza Ali passed a very happy hour, thinking that his success in gaining the money from his master Mohammed Azim Khan would secure the good will of the Vazir Fatah Khan, and of Dost Mohammed Khan; but unluckily the Vizir had a wine party that night, and was a little intoxicated. Now the enemies of Mirza availed themselves of such a favourable opportunity of speaking against him to the Vazir; and added, that the Mirza would shortly induce Mahommed Azim Khan to stand up in opposition to the Vazir, because he had hoarded up an immense sum of money, and gained the attachment of every man for his master: adding, that if he were immediately put to death, then Mohammed Azim Khan, having no ill adviser like him, would never dare to offend the Vazir.

The Vazir was alarmed at this fabricated report of the enemies of Mirza Ali Khan, and as he was a little intoxicated he resolved at once to put an end to the life of the poor Mirza. Considering that no one could perpetrate the deed immediately but

Dost Mohammed Khan, he therefore sent for him, and said privately to him, that without fearing Mohammed Azim Khan, he was to go quickly and kill Mirza Ali Khan his secretary.

On receiving the orders of the Vazir, Dost Mohammed armed himself cap-a-pie, and taking six men with him went and remained waiting on the road between the house of Mohammed Azim Khan and the Mirza. It was about midnight when the Mirza passed by Dost Mohammed Khan, whom he saw, and said, "What has brought your highness here at this late hour? I hope all is good." He also added, that Dost Mohammed should freely command his services if he could be of any use to him. He replied to the Mirza, that he had got a secret communication for him, and would tell him if he moved aside from the servants. He stopped his horse, whereupon Dost Mohammed, holding the mane of his horse with his left hand, and taking his dagger in the right, asked the Mirza to bend his head to hear him. While Dost Mohammed pretended to tell him something of his own invention, and found that the Mirza was hearing him without any suspicion, he stabbed him between the shoulders,

and throwing him off his horse cut him in many places. This was the commencement of the murders which Dost Mahommed Khan afterwards frequently committed.

When Mohammed Azim Khan was informed of the murder of his beloved and useful secretary, Mirza Ali Khan, by the hands of Dost Mohammed Khan, there were no bounds to his grief and anger against the perpetrator of this shocking deed. That very moment he ordered his followers to get ready for fight, and he came out of his house with them. Dost Mohammed immediately joined the Vazir, and told him that Mirza Ali was no more, and that his master was preparing to revenge himself upon him for the assassination. While he was speaking with the Vazir, information arrived that Mohammed Azim Khan was going to report to Mahmud Shah the unlawful conduct of the murderer, and beg him to co-operate in punishing the conspirators.

On this the Vazir Fatah Khan sent Mohammed Rahim, Ata-ullah Khan, and Shah Ghazi Dilavar, with the holy Qoran in their hands, begging Mohammed Azim Khan to pardon him and Dost for the past, and added to him, that if the Vazir was

destroyed the result would be nothing short of the downfall of the whole family, as the good and ill fortune of Mohammed Azim Khan were closely connected with those of the Vazir, Dost Mohammed, and the rest of the brothers. He (Mohammed Azim), for the sake of the respect due to the Qoran, went back to his house, without going and reporting the case to Mahmud Shah, and remained quiet, though vexed.

After the lapse of three or four days the Vazir Fatah Khan, by the advice of the politic Dost Mohammed, went in person to apologise to Mohammed Azim Khan for the murder of his secretary Mirza Ali Khan; Dost Mohammed also accompanied him. They both pretended to express sorrow for the loss of his Mirza; they consoled him, and apologised to him exceedingly. Afterwards they all proceeded together to the palace, and stated before Mahmud Shah, that they were all one-hearted brethren, and that the past accident was all forgotten.

From time to time the Vazir Fatah Khan treated Dost Mohammed Khan with much consideration, and had a high opinion of his bravery, enterprising character, and experience, from which he had gained

numerous advantages. He accordingly used his influence in the court, and at last succeeded in inducing Mahmud Shah to confer the title of Sardar, or chief, upon Dost Mohammed Khan, and to give him much more influence in the affairs of government. Now the Sardar of my tale became the object of more jealousy among his brothers. Every one of them feared and suspected him; and they, as well as the other chiefs, feeling alarmed, began to say among themselves, that it was not unlikely the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan would soon send them also to join Mirza Ali Khan.

In short, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan established his plans so firmly, and grew so much in power, that he never acted on the advice of any individual, but managed affairs by his own mature deliberation. This established the affection and confidence of the Vazir in him much more than before, and his influence increased more and more daily. The Sardar was always present in the night parties of the Vazir, and bore a golden cup permanently in his hands. He filled it with water and sometimes with wine, as the Vazir requested, and gave it to him to drink.

It is said that when the Vazir was a little tipsy at these wine parties, he generally gave a hint to the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan to enter his room (whence his beloved wife, named Bhagi, was witnessing the pleasures of the party) to prepare his bed. While the Sardar was engaged in performing this duty, his graceful, youthful, and comely person, had desperately won the love and heart of the above-mentioned lady. It was out of her power to keep her feelings secret any longer from the beloved object—the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, the pleasure of whose society she enjoyed till the Vazir, her noble husband, entered the apartment. It is not known whether the Vazir was aware of this fire of love between his wife and the Sardar, which was every day gaining strength. On many occasions the Vazir allowed him to remain in his private room to enjoy the advantages of his society and conversation. It must be remembered that neither Shah Mahmud nor his Vazir Fatah Khan could boast of their good morals. There was no limit to their most dissipated practices. Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was undoubtedly a beautiful lad, and therefore a real favourite of the Vazir, who allowed generally his

beautiful brother to remain in his palace, and thus gain the royal favours and power.

When the Vazir Fatah Khan received the required sum from Mohammed Azim Khan, he made the necessary arrangements for undertaking an expedition against the Governor of Kashmir, named Ata Mohammed Khan Bamzai, son of the late Mukhtar-ud-daulah. Before the army of the Vazir, under the immediate command of the sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, reached the suburbs of Kashmir, the said Governor sent overtures, and agreed to pay the tribute of three lakhs of rupees annually to the Kabul government; which promise was gladly accepted by the Vazir and the Sardar. Hence they sent their agents to receive the stipulated sum, and bent their course towards Multan.

Immediately after their departure the agents of the Vazir Fatah Khan, and of the Sardar Dost Mahommed Khan, were driven out of Kashmir by Ata Mohammed Khan, the governor of that place; and with all haste they joined their masters in the country of Multan. On their arrival they reported to the Vazir and to the Sardar that the said governor had treated them with disgrace, and refused

to pay the tribute. On this the Vazir and the Sardar retraced their steps by the Esakhail route, and purposed to weaken the power of the refractory governor by besieging and reducing the fort of Atak.

In the mean time the unfortunate news came from Kabul that the Sayad Ashraf and Sayad Ata, the great fanatics, had placed Shah Zadah Abbas on the throne, and intended to excite their Sunni followers to attack the Persians. This not only frustrated all the plans of the Vazir Fatah Khan, and of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, but created great confusion amid the Persian division of their army, —the foundation of their power. They came and stated to the Vazir and to the Sardar, that if they were not allowed immediately to return to Kabul for the purpose of protecting their fellow Persians against the intended attack of the Sunnis, their wives and children, now in Kabul, would be massacred, or made slaves by the bigoted enemies of their creed. The generals assured the Persians of their protection, and begged them to stay one month longer in their camp, to reduce the turbulent Governor of Kashmir; but they were so uneasy about

their families, that against the wish of their masters they struck their tents and took the road to Kabul.

The departure of the Persian division of the army of the Vazir Fatah Khan and of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan weakened their power so much, that they had no remedy but to cross the Atak and follow them to Peshavar. Here a council of war was held between the wise Sardar and the Vazir; and it was resolved that the latter, with his nominal king Mahmud Shah, should remain in Peshavar, and that the former, along with Mohammed Azim Khan, and the head of the returning division of the Persians, should proceed to Kabul, whither the Vazir and Mahmud Shah should soon follow them. After speedy and double marches every day the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan and his Persian party reached Kabul; and for ten days a hard fight continued between him and the rebels, headed by Shah Zadah, afterwards called Shah Abbas. In this battle the victory was won by the Sardar, and Shah Abbas was made prisoner. The principal factious chiefs, as Sayad Ashraf, with his tumultuous friends of Kohistan, were ordered by the Sardar to

be executed. The other fanatic rebel Sayad Ata was laid down on his breast on the ground, and then an elephant was made to trample on him, which crushed him to death. Such was the end of Sayad Ata, a descendant of the Prophet!!

The Vazir Fatah Khan, and Mahmud Shah, on their return, found that every thing was quiet in Kabul, and that the wicked men had been annihilated by the Sardar Dost Mohammed and Mohammed Azim Khan. They all passed about one year in the arduous duty of restoring order, peace, and security, in the administration of the government. The reform and improvement in the revenue and mercantile matters introduced by the sagacious Sardar filled the empty chests of the government with money. The money coined in the temporary reign of the unfortunate Shah Abbas had much mixture of copper in it, and very little silver. To this the Sardar paid particular attention, and melting the whole of the bad coin, ordered that purer silver should be obtained and be struck into new coin of proper value.

No sooner had the affairs of the government improved, and the state treasury was a little filled,

than the Vazir Fatah Khan and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan made preparations for an expedition against Kashmir, but it is said that the Vazir was not so quick as usual, and appeared very slow in his preparations for an immediate departure. This was at once observed by the sharp eyes of the Sardar, who addressed the following speech to the Vazir in open "darbar" or court. "It appears to me that the victory gained last year, the annihilation of the seditious chiefs, the confinement of Shah Zadah Abbas, the repossession of Kabul, and the elevation of our King Shah Mahmud to the throne of his forefathers, by the use of the sword, and by the wisdom of the members of our family, have been a sufficient source of gratification to those who are attached to our fortunes and to his Majesty Shah Mahmud. Not only this, but the citizens, fearless of the attacks of the lawless followers of the late rebel Sayad Ashraf of Kohistan, sleep comfortably: reform and improvement have been successfully introduced into the agitated affairs of government, may our King Shah Mahmud, and my noble brother the present Vazir, as well as the rest of chiefs, including myself, enjoy the fruit of our hard

earned authority; but I regret to say that the luxurious habits of the king, and of my noble brother the Vazir, and the carelessness of the other chiefs, bid fair to cause that the present condition of the country be not a lasting one; and that the enjoyments of my superiors be not durable; and in this respect the most blind and foolish policy appears to prevail. One cause for every one of the above-mentioned individuals falling into luxurious indolence appears to be, that they forget the seditious conduct of Ata Mohammed Khan, governor of the rich valley of Kashmir, without the possession of which region no king of Afghanistan has been, or ever will be, able to maintain a large army and the royal dignity." The noble hearers, as well as the Vazir, made no opposition to the speech of the Sardar, but every one cried aloud the words "Bisyar Khub" (well done) with cheers. The Sardar added, "Notwithstanding the peace and pleasure which every one seems to enjoy, and that to imitate them there is an open field for me also, yet the rules of sound and foresighted diplomacy, which are always wandering in my heart and brain, have not allowed me to rest a moment, and I shall never be easy until some

mature steps are taken to punish the hostile obstinacy of Ata Mohammed Khan, the governor of Kashmir, who turned the government agent, as well as that of my noble brother the Vazir, with disgrace out of the valley; and refused to pay the stipulated sum of tribute. It is not possible to defray the general expenses of the movements of an army under my noble brother the Vazir, to check the restless spirit of the discontented chiefs, unless the country of Kashmir be ceded to us." This speech of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan did not only cause the cheers of the assembly, but excited all the chiefs, and his noble brother the Vazir, to set out immediately for Kashmir.

On this a great number of horses were distributed among the chiefs, and the state treasury was opened to pay the troops, who went off with the Vazir Fatah Khan and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan for Kashmir. When they reached Atak, and were in the western part of the Panjab, they entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the lion of this state, the late Maharajah Ranjit Singh. His Majesty the Maharajah assisted them with a large Sikh force to chastise the governor of Kashmir, named Ata

Mohammed Khan. The governor was busy making the necessary preparations to defend himself. When all negotiations failed, both armies were ordered to get ready for fighting the next morning. The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan led the Kabul army with steadiness and order, and suddenly engaged with the enemy. A great action took place between the two Afghan chiefs, and after a great loss of men on both sides, the lion of Kabul was successful, and Ata Mohammed Khan, the governor, with his brother Gholam Mohammed, were totally routed and made prisoners.

After the rich and celebrated valley of Kashmir came thus into the possession of the Vazir Fatah Khan and of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, they dismissed the Sikh general to return with his army to the Maharajah, and gave him some friendly presents for his Highness. As some intrigues were in existence between the prisoners and the Sikh general, he therefore begged the Vazir and the Sardar to have them released, and allow them to proceed with him to Lahore. The Sardar thoroughly disapproved, and gave his reasons for so doing. He also pointed out to the Vazir the harm which would

undoubtedly follow if the prisoners were delivered over to the Sikh government; nevertheless the general succeeded in inducing the Vazir to allow Gholam Mohammed Khan to go with him, and to keep his brother, the late governor, still by him as a prisoner. This extremely annoyed the Sardar, who, in a tone of displeasure, said to his noble brother the Vazir, "Allow me to prophesy the calamity which the release of Gholam Mohammed Khan will bring upon our heads, and remorse to you for your unwise policy," &c. &c.

The day was not far distant when the symptoms of the misfortunes which the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan had predicted, began to appear, on the very arrival of Gholam Mohammed Khan in the court of Ranjit Singh. He insisted upon his third brother Jahandad Khan, the commandar of Atak, selling that fort to the Sikh government; and his brother did so on receiving one lakh of rupees for it. The occupation of that important fort by the Sikh garrison provided the Maharajah with the key of the conquest not only of Kashmir after a short time, but of many other Afghan places on the western bank of the Indus. Now the Vazir repented of his folly in

liberating Gholam Mohammed Khan, and giving him to the Sikh chief, which he had done utterly against the advice of Dost Mohammed Khan.

The Vazir Fatah Khan felt himself in a very complicated situation, and was lost in speculations how to repair his mistake, and put his affairs on a better footing. He appointed Mohammed Azim Khan governor of Kashmir, and himself, with the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, quitted that valley for Atak. Here they resolved to attack the Sikh garrison. On this the Lion of Panjab dispatched an army of thirty thousand men, under the command of Divan Mohkam Chand, Bhai Ram Singh, Dal Singh, and Ghaus Kham, with directions to destroy the Afghan force. This large army encamped on the bank Nilab branch of the Indus, and engaged in action with the Vazir and the Sardar. The latter was the hero of the field, and his exploits of that day were highly applauded by the Sikh generals. At last the Sikh army succeeded in depriving the Afghans of the place whence they were provided with water.

It was about midday that the sun grew hotter, and the weather exceedingly warm, whilst both armies were annihilating their respective antagonists. The

thirst, in consequence of the scarcity of water, was sadly felt in the army of the Vazir and of the Sardar, on which the former begged the latter hero to take command of the Qizilbash or Persian cavalry, and at once rush into the main column of the Sikh army. On this occasion the Sardar and his Qizilbash fought so desperately that the Sikh heroes gave them the title of gallants of the first class, and the ornamental title of celebrated and matchless champions (Rustam and Afra si ab*) of the old days. The Sardar rushed into the main line of the enemy, captured some of their guns, and forced them to leave their ground and retreat; but unfortunately some of the Afghans, overpowered by thirst, made such a disorderly attack on the other division of the Sikh army, that they were repulsed with loss: and thus the Kabul army, under the Vazir and the Sardar, after gaining once victory and guns, was routed, and compelled to fall back upon Peshâvar, and from thence they marched to Kabul. Here the news arrived that Shah Shuja, with the Shah Zadah Haidar, had collected a large force, and having fought with the Navab Jabbar Khan, the governor of Derah Ghazi Khan, were

* Fabulous warriors of Shah Namah.

defeated. Though this intelligence was acceptable to them, yet it excited the jealousy of the Navab's brothers, the Vazir and the Sardar, who proceeded to supplant him. On their arrival at Derah they said to the Navab that, with regard to the sum of three lakhs of rupees, the balance of the revenues of Derah, he was squandering all this to satisfy his vanity and idle pleasures; and that, therefore, they must dismiss the Navab, having done which they returned with Mahmud Shah to Kabul.

CHAPTER III.

Brothers envy Dost Mohammed Khan—He chastises the Kohistanis—Expedition against Hirat—Murder of the Vazir Fatah Khan—The Sardar takes up arms—Besieges the Bala Hisar—Takes Kabul, and makes Sultan Ali king, and himself minister—His intrigues—Murder of Shah Sultan Ali—Mohammed Azim Khan—The Sardar procures money from the Sindhians—He deserts—Takes Ghazni—Fights with Azim Khan—Corresponds with Ranjit Singh—Sikh force at Peshavar—Dost's treachery towards Azim Khan—Death of Azim Khan.

ALTHOUGH the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan received kindness and honour from his principal brothers, as the Vazir Fatah Khan, &c., yet being born from a mother of a different creed, and not of a high Afghan family, he was looked upon with contempt by the other brothers, who boasted that they were descended from pure and noble parents. On several occasions the jealousy of the brothers threw him into all the distresses of poverty. His dependants and horses have often passed nights and days without a piece of bread for the human being or a blade of grass for the horses.

In spite of this cheerless state of life, Dost Mohammed Khan never departed from the perseverance of his mind, combined as it was with all the external appearances of sincerity, and real internal hypocrisy. He was trying to gain ascendancy by all means possible, and therefore in return for all the animosity of his jealous brothers his behaviour towards them was at all times civil and obliging. This sometimes made them exceedingly ashamed of their own conduct, and at the same time astonished at his superior wisdom and management. His sweet words were supported by flattery, and he showed himself regardless of that respect which his own age was entitled to receive from his younger brothers, who were prosperous while himself was poor; and by these means he had created and organised such sound schemes for his own success that none could dare to hope to annihilate him. I have heard with my own ears from the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, that he had gone without food for three or four days successively, and several nights, after taking only a morsel of dry bread or a handful of half-fried grain—that in the mean time he had often laid himself down on the bare ground, making the stone his pillow; and

also, having no means to maintain servants, he had many times saddled his own horse. While his heart was wounded with these painful wants, his conversation was always refreshed by a lively wit and a smiling countenance, leaving behind an impression of admiration on the hearts of the chiefs under his brothers.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was excessively fond of drinking, and carried it to an extreme excess. It is said that he has emptied several dozens of bottles in one night, and did not cease from drinking until he was quite intoxicated, and could not drink a drop more. He has often become senseless with drinking, and has on that account kept himself confined in bed during many days. He has been often seen in a state of stupidity on horseback, and having no turban, but a skull-cap on his head.

It has been stated by the early companions of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and confirmed by his own mouth, that he had and still has an extraordinary taste for music. When pleased with drinking wine, he has often sung ballads, and played upon the "Rabab," a kind of fiddle. His intimate friend and supporter was Gholam Khan Populzai; and both

these persons were considered in Afghanistan the first players on the "Rabab." The fort of Nanchi was the favourite seat where Dost Mohammed Khan formed his pleasure parties, and these were generally composed of Gholam Khan Populzai, Mirza Abdul Sami, and Agha Mohammed. The former, being richer than the Sardar, assisted him frequently in pecuniary matters, and clothed and fed him on many occasions. Gradually he gained rather more influence, yet was in the habit of drinking.

It was on the evening of a beautiful day in the spring, that the eldest son of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, named Mohammed Afzal Khan, drank wine with his younger brother, Mohammed Akhbar Khan, and both of them met him drunk. He was incensed at their conduct, and determined to punish them. He seized and bruised them severely; and at last taking them up to the roof, threw them down on stony ground, by which he had nearly endangered their existence. On this his favourite wife, the mother of Mohammed Akhbar Khan, who is wiser than the other wives of the Sardar, was informed of the dangerous state of her son. She went to her husband and stated that he himself is desirous

of drinking, while he punishes the sons, and persuades them to the contrary; and that this is not just, as the wise of former days have said that a son cannot well inherit the property unless he follows the example of his father, and that consequently they imitated him in drinking. Hearing these words from the lips of his favourite, the Sardar felt ashamed, and then swore not to drink wine any more.

At the time Mahmud Shah returned from Derahjat, the chiefs of Kohistan, especially the head men and priests of Istalif, made an open rebellion. The Vazir Fatah Khan formed an expedition against them, but was obliged to fall back unsuccessful, having spoiled their cultivation and gardens. This made the rebels suffer the risk of starvation, and they made a resolution and agreed with each other to revenge the loss by destroying the residence of the Vazir in Kabul, and ruining his garden by ploughing over the young plants with a plough drawn by asses, which they did immediately the Vazir quitted the capital to punish some other distant refractory chiefs.

The Shah Mahmud and the Vazir Fatah Khan did all in their power to induce the Kohistanis to

come into allegiance by bribes, titles, and rewards; but all this was useless: and when any threatening preparations were made against them they ascended the mountains. This disorderly state of things continued for some time, when the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan volunteered to undertake the government of Kohistan and to punish the ringleaders. The Shah and the Vazir gladly accepted the offer, and made him governor of that turbulent district. He left Kabul with his followers, and encamped at Nanchi the first day. Here he passed the night with his Qizilbash friends in drinking, singing, and dancing, and also committed some other idle acts unworthy of his dignity. Navab Asad Khan having heard of it, advised the Sardar not to do any base act of the kind hereafter, as it will fix an everlasting stigma on his character. To this he replied, that though he was guilty of folly, yet the charge is not so bad as the mean and covetous oppression of the Navab himself. The latter requested him to explain what he meant; on which the Sardar reminded him that on a certain time he saw at the court of the Navab that a woman complained against her husband. He was summoned, and proved clearly that he had been always partial

to his wife, and had never given her any reason for dissatisfaction. After a long investigation, the Navab discovered that the old husband being careless of the rules of society, disgusted his wife. Here the Sardar stated that the Navab Asad Khan decided that both were guilty, and therefore commanded them to pay three hundred rupees as a fine to him, besides suffering a long imprisonment. When this was asserted by the Sardar as a sample of the justice distributed by the Navab with regard to the wife and her husband, he caused the whole assembly to laugh at the farce of his adviser, the Navab, who thenceforward ceased to interfere with the Sardar.

Next day, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan entered the valley of Kohistan, where he succeeded in seizing numerous robbers, whom he immediately executed. Also by his sweet and hypocritical words, as well as by all possible sacred oaths, he induced the various rebel chiefs to wait upon him, and then lost no time in murdering them. On his arrival at Charkar, the Sardar took up his quarters in the fort of Faiz Khan. He induced Aslam Khan and Saqi Khan by a solemn agreement to join him in Charkar with other chiefs; and they relied on his oaths and

paid him their respects. In order to banish all suspicion of his evil intentions towards them, he married the daughter of Baqa Khan, one of the chiefs, and thus, after gaining their confidence, put the father of the new bride to death. This assumed garb of sincerity was, however, merely a mask; and while the chiefs were dining with him, the Sardar made a signal to cut off their heads. There was still one of his greatest foes alive, whom the Sardar wished to destroy, and while he was in existence the Sardar considered that the tranquillity would exist neither in Kohistan nor in Kabul, where the people of the Sunni sect always raise tumult by his aid. He sent deputation after deputation with solemn declarations written on the Qoran, and assured Khojah Khanji of his highest regard and respect towards him. He addressed him as a father, and stated that his intention was to give charge of the government of Kohistan to him, and himself go back to Kabul. All these flattering but false oaths produced no effect upon the cautious Khojah. Hereupon the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan adopted a most novel measure to get hold of him at the sacrifice of another man. Khojah Khanji, like other chiefs of Kohistan,

had many enemies, and one of the strongest was with Dost Mohammed Khan. He put him to the sword, and thus boasted the sincerity of his good wish towards the Khojah, as proved by destroying his enemy. This vile deed was perpetrated at Bayan, where he begged the Khojah to honour him with his company, to settle past differences at the place of the murder of his antagonist. Induced at length, and blinded by his destiny, he came with a large number of followers. No one of course was better able than the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan to restore confidence by his sweet language, in the Khojah, whom he addressed on every occasion as his venerable father. In the evening the Sardar led his guest inside of the fort, on the pretence that he might survey the valuable property of his enemy, whom the Sardar just destroyed in order to ensnare the Khojah. As soon as he was within, the gates of the castle were shut in the face of his followers, and the Sardar praised the gun of the Khojah, and desired him to show it to him. Immediately after this he ordered his Qizilbash companions to assassinate the Khojah, whom he at the same time called his father! and his head was thrown over the walls amid the large retinue

of this unfortunate victim. At this sad occurrence his followers determined to attack the fort, and fired for a considerable part of the night; but in the morning they all dispersed, leaving the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan to enjoy the triumph of his wilful murders. This was not the end of his dexterity in such deeds, for he massacred in one day eight of the chiefs at Charkar, and Sayad Ashrat of Opiyan, men of great influence and reverence, shared the same fate. When he had no more blood to shed, he engaged himself in arranging matters for collecting the revenues and distributing justice. In two months he completed these affairs and returned to Kabul.

While the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was employed in Kohistan, he was accompanied by Jai Singh, a Sikh chieftain, with whom he had become acquainted, when the latter was on a mission to Peshavar. Shah Mahmud and the Vazir Fatah Khan finding that the affairs in Kohistan were all satisfactorily settled by the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, they appointed a governor in Kabul, and themselves started for Peshavar. Hence they dispatched the Navab Asad Khan to Sardar Mohammed Azim Khan in Kashmir, demanding the sum of twenty

lakhs of rupees, the arrears of the revenue of that valley. He delayed the payment of the sum, by which he hastened the departure of the army of the Shah to Kashmir. Mohammed Azim Khan, having heard of the hostile movements of his brothers under his Majesty, assembled all the chiefs with their forces, strengthened the fort of Muzaffarabad with a strong garrison, and afterwards encamped on the road between the two hills to check the progress of his enemy. The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was called upon to lead the attacking army. He found that the road was narrow, and closely occupied by Azim Khan, and that an attempt to force through would cause a great slaughter of his men. On mature deliberation he commands his followers to dismount from their horses and follow him to fight on foot in ascending the hills, and thus compel Azim Khan to fall back on Kashmir. The Sardar forced the garrison of Muzaffarabad to surrender, on which the enemy strongly occupied all the heights of the mountains which closely commanded the route of the Sardar's force. Here the Shah and the Vazir, as well as Dost Mohammed Khan, found themselves placed in a difficult position, and without any pro-

spect of gaining a victory. Nevertheless the perfidy of the latter did more good to their cause than the swords of his party. He wrote letters to some of the chiefs in the camp of Azim Khan, stating that he had received all their letters, and laid them under the feet of Shah and of the Vazir. He added that these have appreciated their good will, and believe that they will fulfil their promised resolution by imprisoning and bringing the disloyal chief (Azim) into the presence of his Majesty early next day, while all in the camp are engaged in attending to their morning prayers. The cunning Sardar directed the bearer of the letters to pass by such a road and company on guard, so that he might be detected, and his letters and himself taken to Mohammed Khan. It was done accordingly, and caused in him the utmost alarm. He began to suspect that all his retinue were bribed, and that he would no doubt be delivered as a prisoner to the Sardar. In the mean time he continued his talk of fighting to the last, and yet on the other hand he secretly opened a negotiation with his foes. While this was going on, the winter and snow caused a great loss on both sides, and a treaty of peace was concluded on condition of receiving pro-

21043

visions for two weeks, and a sum of thirteen lakhs of rupees. Azim Khan came in person to the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and there having tied a sword to his neck and the Holy Qoran on his head,* he accompanied the Sardar thence to the royal camp. The Vazir Fatah Khan, with the consent of his royal master, pardoned Azim Khan, embraced and kissed him as his brother. Such was the fruitful result of the Sardar's perfidious letters!

The army of Mahmud Shah returned to Kabul, and after passing the few months of the winter there, intended to go to Qandhar. The intelligence of the Sikhs having been attacked by Mohammed Azim Khan in Kashmir, and of their having been routed by him with great loss, inspired a joyful and fresh enthusiasm in the Vazir Fatah Khan and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and they prepared an expedition for defending Hirat against the Persians. On reaching Qandhar they received information that their nephew Abdul Vahid Khan, at the head of the Hirat army, had been defeated by the Persian prince Hasan Ali Mirza at Ghoryan, and probably taken prisoner.

* A sign of confessing to be guilty, and imploring pardon.

This news alarmed the Vazir Fatah Khan, who, leaving Mahmud Shah at Qandhar, set out with great haste to stop the Persians before they might come upon Hirat, and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan of course was with him. Mahmud Shah was not well disposed towards Haji Firozuddin, the prince and ruler of Hirat, in consequence of his not assisting him when routed by Shah Shuja, and thus gave secret encouragement to the Vazir for the purpose of punishing the Shah Zadah Firoz, who was his own brother. All the Afghans and other chiefs of Khorasan became attached to them by the liberality of the Vazir and the flattering tongue of the Sardar. A battle ensued; it was fought bravely, and the Vazir was slightly wounded by the Persian army or by his own adherents; but of this the certainty is not known. This wound, however, caused the Vazir to abandon the field of action, where Dost Mohammed Khan had distinguished himself to an amazing degree.

Shah Zadah Haji Firozuddin treated the Vazir Fatah Khan with marked distinction, and commanded all his chiefs to pay their respects every morning to the Vazir before they come to his Royal

Highness; but this generous feeling of the Shah Zadah made no favourable impression upon his guest. He directed the active Dost Mohammed Khan to enter the city of Hirat, under the pretence of being invited, and to place his Kohistan followers in small parties for the night, in the different houses of relations and friends. The Vazir added, that when the chiefs of the Haji should come to see him next day out of the city, he should make them prisoners, and Dost Mohammed Khan was to shut the gates of the city, and take possession of the palace "Arg" with the prince. He entered the city, as was arranged, with his retinue, and after the sun rose and the Shah Zadah's courtiers had gone out to Fatah Khan, as usual, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan massacred the palace-guard and seized the person of the Shah Zadah Firoz. Afterwards he commenced to plunder and to gain possession of all the jewels, gold, and treasure of the captive prince, and even went so far as to despoil the inmates of the household; and committed an unparalleled deed by taking off the jewelled band which fastened the trowsers of the wife of the Prince Malik Qasim, the son of the captive, and treated her rudely in other ways. The

pillaged lady was the sister of Kam Ran, to whom she sent her profaned robe; and the Shah Zadah, or her brother, resolved and swore to revenge the injury. Fatah Khan was informed of the immense booty which the Sardar had taken, and also his improper conduct towards the royal lady; and the Vazir planned to take the plundered property from the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and to chastise him for his deeds in the Palace. The Sardar having heard of this made his way through the mountains to join his brother Mohammed Azim Khan, the governor of Kashmir. He was there put under restraint by the direction of the Vazir, who was preparing again to wage war with the Persians.

The Shah Zadah Kam-Ran reached Hirat, internally determined to have revenge, and yet externally he appeared very civil to the Vazir Fatah Khan. He advised him to procrastinate his second expedition against the Persians, and that it would be better to give rest to his army. In the mean time he laid a plot for the ruin of the Vazir; and many other Durrani chiefs, who had been reduced to subordination by the Vazir, and were jealous of his increasing power, joined him in planning the destruc-

tion of the Vazir. He was seized by Kam Ran at the consent of his father Mahmud Shah, and blinded by Ata Mohammed Khan Bamzai. His brothers contrived their escape from Hirat, excepting Purdil Khan, who was also released on the condition of his continuing loyal and obedient to the prince. No tragedy of modern days can be compared with that barbarous one that ended the life of the Vazir. He was conducted blind, and pinioned, into the presence of Mahmud Shah, whom he had elevated to the throne. The Shah asked him to write to his rebellious brothers to submit, to which he replied with fortitude, that he was a poor blind prisoner, and had no influence over his brothers. Mahmud Shah was incensed at his obstinacy, and ordered him to be put to the sword, and the Vazir was cruelly and deliberately butchered by the courtiers, cutting him limb from limb, and joint from joint, as was reported, after his nose, ears, fingers, and lips, had been chopped off. His fortitude was so extraordinary that he neither showed a sign of the pain he suffered, nor asked the perpetrators to diminish their cruelties, and his head was at last sliced from his lacerated body. Such was the shocking result of the misconduct of his brother

the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan towards the royal female in Hirat. However, the end of the Vazir Fatah Khan was the end of the Sadozai realm, and an omen for the accession of the new dynasty of the Barakzais, or his brothers in Afghanistan.

Mohammed Azim Khan wrote from Kashmir to Shah Shuja, and assured him of the united aid of his brothers, as well as of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, against Shah Mahmud, who had ordered his brother the Vazir to be murdered. Shuja was joined by Nawab Mohammed Zaman Khan, and after defeating Samandar Khan, he took possession of Derah Ghazi Khan. The Sardar received the sum of three lakhs of rupees from his brother Azim Khan in Kashmir, and assembled a moderate force to join his brothers Yar, Sultan, and Pir Mohammed Khan in Peshavar, and these elevated and acknowledged the Prince Ayub, king of Afghanistan. The Sardar also made secret engagements with the Prince Sultan Ali, and secured his consent to make him sovereign if necessary. Mahmud Shah was frightened to death by the threatening news that the Barakzai had resolved to supplant him in the throne. In the mean time Ranjit Singh caused an alarm towards Atak,

which forced the brothers of the Vazir to leave Peshavar and take shelter in Lalpurah. Hence the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan sent a few beautiful horses, with some other presents, to the Lion of Panjab; and as soon as he returned towards his capital, the Sardar, with his brothers Yar Mohammed Khan, &c., came through the Khaibar upon Peshavar, and compelled Jahandad Khan, the Bamzai, to flee to the country of the Yusafzais.

On this Ata Mohammed Khan, the Bamzai, relation of Jahandad Khan, induced Mahmud Shah and Kam Ran to send Prince Jahangir, the son of the latter, with him, and to subdue all the Barakzai rebels, as he called Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, the brother of the murdered Vazir. He succeeded in his proposals to the king, and came to Kabul with the prince. Immediately the Sardar wrote an offensive and defensive treaty on the margin of the Holy Qoran, and in an important article thereof he and his brothers bound themselves by a solemn oath to divide the kingdom for ever between themselves and Ata Mohammed Khan, if he agreed to lend no assistance whatever either to Shah Shuja, to Kam Ran, or to any other Sadozai. The Sardar dis-

patched this treaty in charge of a confidential adherent, and Ata Mohammed Khan, knowing that neither Shah Shuja nor Mahmud Shah, with Kam Ran, could shine in the presence of the brighter talents of the Sardar, he accepted the offers made in the treaty. He sent a secret letter to the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan with a verbal token to make it more sincere, and which was in these words: "When the late Vazir Fatah Khan left you with Prince Kam Ran a long time ago in Qandhar, the friendship between us (Dost and Ata Mohammed) was strengthened by a solemn oath." If this was true, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was to march for Kabul with easiness of mind, and at Khovajah Rivash he will meet and confer with the Sardar himself. At the arrival of such a flattering communication from Ata Mohammed Khan Bamzai, the Sardar made arrangements to leave Ayub Shah at Peshavar, and taking with him Shah Zadah Sultan Ali and Ismail, he set out for Kabul. The Sardar was well aware that the former Shah Zadah was the master of three or four lakhs of rupees, and he therefore renewed his promise and oaths of putting the crown of Kabul on his head, and

gave hopes of the same nature secretly to the latter Shah Zadah.

After uninterrupted and rapid marches the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan reached Butkhak with the Shah Zadahs,—and the Prince Jahangir ordered Ata Mohammed Khan, the Bamzai (who had already entered into intrigues with the Sardar), and Baqar Khan, to meet the Sardar with arms, and to shut themselves within the citadel of the Bala Hisar in Kabul, with a considerable store of provisions, with the view to be besieged by the enemy to resist till relieved by Mahmud Shah and Kam Ran his father. Ata Mohammed Khan pitched his tent near the village of Bibi Mahru,* and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, with Navab Samad Yar and Pir Mohammed Khan, moved and encamped at Khovajah Rivash, as previously appointed, and about ten o'clock at night Hafizji, the son of Mir Vaiz, and Mulla Hidayat Ullah, effected a clandestine interview between the Sardar and Ata Mohammed, the head of the Jahangir's army. The treaty which had been formerly contracted through their respective

* Where the British troops under Brigadier Shelton were defeated at the outbreak in Kabul in 1841.

deputations, was now solemnly renewed personally. This treaty was resealed by the Sardar, Yar Mohammed, and by Navab Samad Khan, to Ata Mohammed Khan, who was to desert Jahangir, and allow the Sardar to attack the Bala Hisar. Ata Mohammed Khan desired that Pir Mohammed Khan should add his name and seal to this agreement, being one of the brothers of the same family as the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan. As the object of the Sardar was to destroy Ata Mohammed Khan, after he had obtained his end, he therefore thought proper not to include Pir Mohammed Khan in the treaty, for the purpose of employing him against his meditated future enemy, with whom he was now contracting terms of friendship. With this view the Sardar stated repeatedly to Ata Mohammed Khan that Pir Mohammed Khan was young and not fit to be trusted with such important secrets, and that there was no need of his appearing to be a party in the treaty; but that he will, no doubt, follow the example of his brothers respecting the articles of the agreement. Ata Mohammed Khan outwardly harangued his followers, that if they relax in their exertions in

promoting the cause of their royal masters, Shah Mahmud, Shah Zadah Kam Ran, or Shah Zadah Jahangir, and fail to punish the Barakzai rebels (Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, &c.), the wrath of the Almighty God will fall upon them and curse them if they betray his cause. He continued his treacherous harangues for a few days, while secretly he exchanged a great many oaths of perpetual friendship with the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and was thus betraying his own sovereign. It was agreed that they were to have a second interview with each other in the "Burj i Vazir," and ratify the agreements with much more satisfactory and solemn swearings and ceremonies. Ata Mohammed came accordingly, and as soon as he entered the door of the "Burj i Vazir" the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan induced his brother Pir Mohammed (whom he had purposely kept out of the treaty), to throw down his newly and solemnly made friend, Ata Mohammed Khan, on the ground, and to pluck out his eyes; and he accordingly perpetrated this foul deed. The deprivation of sight drove away all ambitious thoughts from the head of the blind chief, who, while governor

of Kashmir, had inflicted similar injuries on numerous persons, and had also taken a prominent part in blinding the late Fatah Khan.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, relieved from a powerful enemy, or an intriguing friend, resolved to besiege the Bala Hisar. Shah Zadah Jahangir was treacherously advised by some of his adherents (with whom Dost Mohammed Khan was intriguing) to evacuate the lower citadel, and to close himself, with his retinue, in the upper one; and the empty part of the Bala Hisar was instantly possessed by the enemy. A battle ensued, and Dost Mohammed Khan formed a mine and blew up part of the gate of the other citadel. Shah Zadah Jahangir then found himself in a dangerous situation, and being accompanied by his confidential friends, he stole his escape towards Ghazni.

Now, after such an extraordinary display of talent and perseverance of mind, after such intrigues and murders, and this surprising run of good luck, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan found himself master of Kabul;—but the peace of his mind was subverted by the arrival of the intelligence that Shah Mahmud and Shah Zadah Kam Ran were in progress

from Qandhar to fight against him; and at the same time that Mohammed Azim Khan had left Kashmir with the view that he, being the eldest of the brothers, should not leave Dost Mohammed to become master of the capital of Afghanistan. He, nevertheless, being elated with his victory, and at the same time fearful of his enemies on the south, and of his jealous brothers on the east, he proclaimed Shah Zadah Sultan Ali as king of Kabul, and made himself his minister. This intelligence more stirred up the jealousy of Mohammed Azim Khan and of the other brothers. They invited Shah Shuja to join with them for their common advantage, but some difference occurred and caused a battle between the Shah and his inviters, in which the latter were victorious, and the former was put to flight. They dared not, however, to move upon Kabul without being under the nominal authority and shadow of the Sadozai Prince; and they therefore sought, found, and proclaimed Shah Zadah Ayub as king. The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, under his own appointed king, Shah Zadah Sultan Ali, now left Kabul to meet Shah Mahmud and Shah Zadah Kam Ran. He soon discovered that it was impossible to gain a victory against such a

powerful army of the Shah, which was composed of all the principal Durrani chiefs; and he therefore thought it advisable to have recourse to his usual intrigues and stratagems. He accordingly forged seals and letters, as if they were from some of the high chiefs, which formed the army of the Shah Mahmud, and which stated their discontent in serving the Mahmud, and a desire to enter into the employment of the Shah Zadah Sultan Ali,—the king made by the Sardar. He also directed one of his confidential chiefs to enter into correspondence with the enemy, and to pretend to intrigue against him (the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan), and, moreover, to enclose the forged letters for Mahmud Shah, in order to convince him of his own (the writer's) fidelity and attachment to the Shah, and of his hatred against his employer Dost Mohammed. This perfidy of the Sardar proved successful, so that Mahmud Shah and Kam Ran became suddenly alarmed, and showed the letters to the chiefs, whose seals and names had been forged, and which they now bore, and all of them solemnly denied being the writers of these letters. In the meantime Salu Khan, called Shah Pasand Khan, stated to Shah

Mahmud that all the Durrani chiefs intended to go over to the enemy; and it so happened about that time the Shah Ghasi Dilavar, with a few horsemen, deserted the Shah's camp and joined the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan. This frightened Shah Zadah Kam Ran and his father to the utmost, and they fled through Hazarajat to Hirat, leaving all the artillery and camp-equipage to the Sardar. Purdil Khan, the other brother, got possession of Qandhar, which was under Gul Mohammed Khan, governor for Mahmud Shah. This was the commencement of Afghanistan into the hands of the Barakzais—Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan and his brothers; and he considered that his good fortune had thus gained for him the possession of Kabul a second time.

Mohammed Azim Khan marched from Kabul with his own assumed king, the Shah Ayub, and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan took possession of the stronghold of Ghazni, where he appointed his younger brother, Amir Mohammed Khan, as Governor, with the view that if overpowered by Mohammed Azim and Shah Ayub, he may easily defend himself in this impregnable fort. However

the Sardar's position was far from securing to him the enjoyment of the possession of the capital, for he found himself at the same time threatened by his brothers at Qandhar, and by those with Mohammed Azim Khan. Numerous negotiations and altercations were exchanged: and at last it was arranged that Mohammed Azim, being the eldest of the brothers, should enjoy Kabul; that Yar Mohammed Khan should possess Peshavar, and Purdil Khan should receive Qandhar, and the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, Ghazni. Thus the country was divided between the brothers of this family, and the nominally proclaimed King of the Sardar was set aside. All appeared happy with this arrangement, and were occupied in planning to repel any external real or apprehended danger. But the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was discontented, and searching for an opportunity to secure his own particular advantage.

Mohammed Azim Khan, with Shah Ayub, left Kabul to proceed against Shah Shuja, who was organizing troops in Shikarpur. When the former passed Ghazni, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan returned to the capital, and reproclaimed Shah Sultan Ali as king; and this made Mohammed Azim Khan

to retrace his steps. When he reached Kabul with his own appointed king, Shah Ayub, the monarch who had been set up by the Sardar abdicated and retired. It is a matter of great difficulty to determine here whether the Sardar did all in his power to subvert the designs of his rival brother, or joined him to dethrone Shah Sultan Ali, who undoubtedly was a prince of high talent and of some wealth. However, he waited upon Sultan Shah, and said to him, that if he was anxious to secure for himself the sovereignty, he must murder Shah Ayub. To this he replied with wrath, that he was not so inhuman as to steep his hands in innocent blood; and he even added, that he will try to destroy any man who shall ever perpetrate such a murder. The Sardar, after making him easy for a few days, persuaded him, for the safety of his person, to retire into the Bala Hisar, which he did. Mohammed Azim Khan explained to Shah Ayub the necessity which existed for putting an end to the life of Shah Sultan Ali,—on the promise that he (Mohammed Azim) will get rid of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan in the same manner, and with this view Ayub meanly agreed. Both of the Shahs were living together on friendly terms, till

after an evening party the poor Shah Sultan Ali retired to repose, when Prince Asmail, son of Ayub Shah, strangled him to death; and now the cruel Shah requested his instigator, Mohammed Azim Khan, to fulfil his promise, of killing the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan. To this request, however, he answered, "How can I murder my brother?" Such was the end of Shah Sultan Ali, by the intrigues of the Sardar who had once elevated him to the throne.

After some time the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan commenced to contrive schemes for reducing the power of his elder brother, Mohammed Azim Khan, and for gaining possession of all his wealth, which he had hoarded up from extortions and all kinds of oppression when Governor of Kashmir. He pretended to appear as if he was really fond of his brother, and could not part with him even when he retired, adding, that he thinks proper to attend him always, and to guard him against his enemies, whereas, in secret, he intended to annihilate him at a favourable opportunity. He had nearly succeeded in his base design when, luckily, Navab Samad Khan became acquainted with the plot, and informed Mo-

hammed Azim Khan immediately. He then increased the number of his personal guard; and to divert the attention of his brother the Sardar he marched with all his treasure and family towards Qandhar, with the intention to receive tribute from the Mirs of Sindh. The Sardar assembled his Qizalbash adherents, such as Mahmud Khan Bayat, &c., and stated that they had abandoned the legal cause of Mahmud Shah, and joined Mohammed Azim Khan in the hope that the wealth he had brought from Kashmir will be circulated amongst them in Kabul; and that now, on the contrary, he goes with it to Qandhar, and enriches its inhabitants. He would therefore advise them to use every energetic exertion and to follow him, and seize him with the Mammon he possesses. They all agreed to this, and started off. Meanwhile Mohammed Azim Khan precipitated his march, and took shelter in the fort of Ghazni; and as he had plenty of money he collected a large force to preserve himself. However, he induced Navab Samad Khan to dissuade the Sardar Dost Mohammed from such an act of hostility against his own brother. The Sardar accepted the terms of peace on condition that a sum of money should be

advanced to him to distribute amongst his followers, which was gladly done.

Easiness of mind was restored to Mohammed Azim Khan by this peace, or rather truce, with the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and he proceeded from Ghazni to Qandhar, where, leaving his cumbersome equipage, and being lightly equipped, he started to demand tribute from the Mirs of Sindh; and the Sardar, under the name of a coadjutor, followed him. When the army arrived at Shikarpur, negotiations began between the Mirs and the invader; and, when about to be satisfactorily concluded, here the arch-intriguer, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, sprung his secret mine, and dispatched his uncle Alahdad Khan clandestinely to Mir Ismail Shah, the Minister of the Mirs of Sindh, with the proposal, that if he were to advance him only one lakh of rupees, in lieu of four lakhs which had been demanded by his brother Mohammed Azim Khan, that he, in conjunction with the other brothers, Sherdil and Pir Mohammed Khan, would march back to Qandhar; which deed, by diminishing the strength of the army, and depriving Azim of all

brotherly support, would compel him to follow them with whatever the Mirs chose to give him, or even with nothing. The minister knew well that the stratagems of the Sardar Dost Mohammed have always been unquestionably successful; and that he was the first man who, for his own little personal advantage, would aptly sacrifice the material interests of his powerful brother. He therefore made the above-mentioned proposal known to the Mirs, and lost no time in sending the amount of money asked by the Sardar, who, being delighted with this success, which otherwise would never have attended him, deserted Mohammed Azim Khan; and Sherdil and Pir Mohammed Khan of course went with him. Now Azim Khan soon discovered that he was treacherously abandoned by his brothers, and by a larger number of forces than what he had with him: and he therefore considered it proper to fall back upon Qandhar, where Purdil Khan received the intelligence of his failure, by the conduct of the Sardar, before the latter reached the city. He received him coolly on account of this: and the Sardar thinking that Mohammed Azim and Purdil

Khan might join to destroy him, and consequently considered that it was the wisest plan for himself to go to the brothers at Peshavar.

On his route from Qandhar he plundered villages, caravans, &c., and extorted money from every one he met till he reached Kabul. Here he created a tumult, but Azim Khan followed to check his progress. The Sardar had already formed a party of his own in the city, and immediately went to Istaliff, for collecting the Kohistanis against Azim Khan. The Navab Samad Khan caused peace between them, on which the Sardar, plundering all he could on the road, came to Peshavar. Here the brothers of course were aware of the danger which would befal them if they were not liberal and polite to their embarrassing guest, and they instantly gave up the district of Kohat, with its revenues, for his support. Mohammed Azim Khan, with the king of his own creation, Shah Ayub, came to Peshavar, and demanded the revenue of that country for his Majesty from his brothers. When this was settled, he thought, imprudently, to leave the Sardar in the rear, in the possession of Kohat; and he promised he would give him a larger country, affording much more revenue,

if he will come with him to Kabul. He then appointed Navabs Samad Khan in Kohat, and Mohammed Zaman Khan at Hashtnagar, he himself retiring to Kabul with the Sardar.

In Kabul the Sardar Dost Mohammed became again restless, and began to quarrel with his brother, Mohammed Azim Khan, and demanded larger sums of money than he could conveniently give. When he pressed hard, Mohammed Azim Khan unwisely said to the Sardar that he may go any where he likes, and that he does not want his services. This was the object of his desire, which proved highly beneficial to himself and injurious to Azim Khan. The Sardar hereupon quitted Kabul, and on the road contrived schemes how he might gain possession of the stronghold of Ghazni. He assembled all his brave followers, and desired them to enter the fort, four persons together; concealing their arms, and to continue so doing until he gives further orders. He added, that they are to avoid the suspicion of the commander at the gate, and if questioned, say they want to buy provisions. When the Sardar found that a sufficient number had gone into the fort for offensive operations, he himself, in disguise, with two

servants, joined the party. The commandant of the guard at the gate was shot by him; and a skirmish took place, which, after some injury on both sides, gave the Sardar possession of the whole gate. He now easily hastened to increase the number of his retinue from his camp; and he soon proclaimed himself the master of Ghazni, and restored confidence and peace among the inhabitants. He engaged himself in repairing and strengthening the fortifications, and stored the place abundantly with ammunition and provisions. He then waited in confidence, ready for the assault of Mohammed Azim Khan.

The intelligence of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan's possessing Ghazni heightened the wrath of Mohammed Azim Khan; and at the head of a strong force, and with battering guns, he came and besieged that fort. For eight days a continued firing was kept up on both sides, and the guns from the citadel caused great slaughter in the camp of the enemy, who, at length, hopeless of subduing the garrison, thought best to negotiate with the Sardar. Navab Samad Khan was then deputed from the camp to confer with Dost for that purpose, but the

Sardar neither opened the gate nor asked him to come in; but hanging out a rope from the rampart he descended by it himself to meet the envoy outside of the fort. The ambassador used every sort of art to deprive the Sardar of the fort, but he swore that he will rather sacrifice his head than give up Ghazni to Mohammed Azim Khan. A second deputation was sent the following day, and another conference was held, in which it was agreed that the Sardar should continue to keep possession of the fort, but that he must come and wait upon Mohammed Azim Khan, as a token of his homage, and so prevent the appearance of disgrace and weakness to be attached to him (Azim). On this the Sardar appointed his younger brother, Amir Mohammed Khan, the governor; and manned every tower and bastion for defence. Having thus secured the place, the Sardar came out, and had an interview with his besieger, and they both embraced, and yet accused each other for the breach of brotherly respect. A treaty of peace was thus concluded, and Mohammed Azim Khan again resolved to levy tribute on the Sindhians.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was now

strengthening himself much, and enjoying repose by the possession of Ghazni, the first stronghold of Afghanistan. Even now nothing could keep him in peace, nor induce him to secure the internal welfare of the country, and he planned to bring external embarrassment on his brother, and on the whole family. With this view he deputed a mission to the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, and kept an unceasing correspondence with the Lahaur court, and hoped by this alliance to elevate himself, and to subdue his brothers, and especially the powerful Mohammed Azim Khan. This excited the alarm of Mohammed Azim Khan, who lost no time to fall back upon Peshavar for the purpose of checking the progress of the Sikhs. The Afghan and the Sikh armies were now near enough to have occasional skirmishes; however, all the Barakzai brothers sent Yar Mohammed Khan as an envoy to the Maharajah Ranjit Singh. He betrayed the trust reposed in him; and with or without the advice of the Sikh invader, he wrote letters to Mohammed Azim Khan, that it was the intention of the Sikhs to take a different route, and to seize his family and treasure then left

at Michni. The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was to be sure connected with the enemy for the destruction of Azim Khan; and these sad circumstances marred his intrepidity. Upon one hand he considered that he ought to prevent the seizure of the wives and treasure by the Sikhs at Michni, and on the other, that retiring from the face of the enemy without hazarding a battle, was a most cowardly deed. In the meantime his heart was bitterly wounded by finding that not only the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan had attached himself to the Lahaur chiefs, but that nearly all the other brothers had followed his example. In this disturbed state of mind he sometimes resolved to fight and keep his ground; and at other times he thought best to break up the camp, for the purpose of preserving his wives and his money. Soon after this his followers became disheartened at the uncertainty of his determinations, and every one began to strike his own tent, and to leave the camp; while no one knew a sufficient cause for so doing. Mohammed Azim Khan, sadly vexed, plucked out his beard, and lamented for the treachery of the Sardar Dost Mo-

hammed Khan, and of the other brothers; and for being thus compelled to retire with the outward show of weakness and disgrace. On his return to Kabul Azim Khan was attacked by dysentery, and soon after died broken-hearted.

CHAPTER IV.

Succession of Habib-ullah Khan—He is defeated by the Sardar —Peace is concluded between them—Habib-ullah's secret intentions—Flight of the Sardar—Sherdil Khan and the Sardar join against Habib-ullah—Policy of Dost—He takes the Bala Hisar—Intrigues and rupture between Sherdil and Dost—Siege of the Bala Hisar—Peace between the brothers—Death of Sherdil Khan—The Sardar sole master of Kabul —Sayad Ahmad's war with the Sikhs—Rebellion at Tagav, and defeat of the Sardar.

SARDAR MOHAMMED AZIM KHAN, by the turn of fortune, was the first in wealth amid the sons of Sarfraz Khan, the brothers of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan. Knowing the incapacity of his son Habib-ullah Khan, he implored Navab Jabbar Khan, as he breathed his last, to take care of his son, whom he requested and charged to wipe away the stigma he had sustained before the Sikhs. After his death Habib-ullah Khan succeeded him; and these two became his favourite and immediate advisers—Hafizji, son of the late

Mir Vaiz, and Aminullah Khan Laho-gardi.* He also wrote and invited Purdil Khan from Qandhar, and treated him with consideration and liberality.

It must not be forgotten that Shah Ayub, the sovereign created by the late Mohammed Azim Khan, was still in the Bala Hisar. He disbelieved his son Shah Zadah Ismail, and paid no attention to his prudent advice,—namely, to seize Habib-ullah Khan with the treasure of his father. Purdil Khan therefore entered the citadel by force, with a large retinue; seized the Shah, and killed the Shah Zadah. He set Ayub at liberty, however, after having caused him to pay the sum of one lakh of rupees; and he then made his way towards the Panjab.

Habib-ullah Khan, surrounded by the abandoned of all classes, immersed himself in base dissipation. The courtiers of his father's time became disgusted; some retired, and some were dismissed. Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan discovered that he had now an open field for his hypocrisy and ambition. Regardless of the difference of age, and of the dignity of an uncle towards a nephew, he pre-

* Who took a prominent part in the rebellion against the English in 1841.

tended to respect Habib-ullah Khan, as older and chief of the family, and therefore as superior to himself. He often ran, and even placed shoes under his nephew's feet, wiping them with his own handkerchief. While the Sardar was cunningly gaining ground and time for the display of his real object, Habib-ullah Khan was fool enough to pride himself by fancying that he already exceeded the power of his late father in reducing the Sardar to the condition of one of the vassals. There was no limit to the false and sweet words of his devotion and affection towards Habib-ullah Khan, and no bound to the pride and vanity of the latter on this occasion. However some old and experienced persons about him, as Aminoollah Khan, &c., always cautioned him against the mask of homage which the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan had politically put on. At length he discovered that the Sardar was paying him a false homage, and was only watching for a favourable opportunity to upset his power. He thereupon disclosed his fears of the Sardar to his unwise companions; and with their consent resolved to seize the Sardar when he comes to his court, and to deprive him of his eyes. Dost Mohammed Khan

proceeded to the Bala Hisar, as usual, in the morning, and it was fortunate for him that Haji Khan Kakar became acquainted with the plot, and on the Sardar's entering the room, where he sat with Habib-ullah, he caught the sight of the Sardar, and put his fingers on his own eyes; which sign the Sardar, of quick understanding, instantly knew meant that Habib-ullah had contrived and conspired to blind him, and consequently he lost not a moment to return and ride off on his horse.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan induced Yar Mohammed Khan to take his part, and prepared to wage war with Habib-ullah Khan. The latter was supported by the son of Mir Vaiz and by many other influential citizens. The followers of both parties came out by the gate named Shah Shahid, and after a long fight the Sardar was victorious. The enemy was besieged, and would have been easily assailed had Dost Mohammed Khan not feared the plunder of his treasure and property, which the Sardar was desirous to procure for his own use. He therefore used his exertions in preventing his followers to enter the residence of Habib-ullah Khan, and stopped in the fort of Baqar Khan Moradkhani,

hemming in the enemy all the night. Next day Amir Mohammed Khan came to aid his brother the Sardar, and Habib-ullah Khan also received reinforcements from Lahogard, when another battle ensued near the fort of Kashif. However, the nobilities interfered and put a stop to the bloodshed. It was agreed that the Sardar was to receive twenty thousand rupees and the revenue of Vardak in addition to that of Ghazni, and Habib-ullah Khan must remain the undisputed master of Kabul. On this the Sardar went to Ghazni and continued to improve the military strength of the place in every way for some time. But Habib-ullah, conscious of his sagacity, could not enjoy rest, for the constant fear of being destroyed by the Sardar was destructive of his happiness: consequently he dispatched agents with valuable presents to the Qandhar chiefs, and sought their alliance. Purdil Khan immediately came to relieve him from anxiety, and to lend him aid if necessary. After some days spent in festivals and parties of pleasure, the real Afghan character showed itself in a misunderstanding which took place between the host and the guest, and this presented an opportunity for the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan

to appear again as the enemy of Habib-ullah Khan. In the plain near the fort of Qazi both sides met for battle, but bloodshed was prevented by the interference of some silver-bearded chiefs. On this Habib-ullah placed the Sardar on the elephant with himself, and brought him into the city with every pomp and show of cordiality, as if he was reconciled heartily with him for ever, while yet he conspired for his murder. He presented him with a large sum of money to distribute among his forces, and thus pretended to show the sincerity of his disposition and attachment. The Sardar meanwhile became acquainted with the conspiracy, and while it snowed heavily he fled from the city, placing his family also on the elephant. The cold was so keen, and the rapidity of the flight was so necessary, that one of his little daughters fell down in that hurried march and expired immediately. Habib-ullah was informed of his escape, and immediately followed and overtook him. He had, however, secured a fort near Maidan for his head-quarters, and was able to sally out and thence to skirmish with his pursuers. Amir Mohammed Khan, the younger brother of the Sardar, started from Ghazni to relieve him; but Habib-ullah,

having known of this, met and routed him on the road. The Sardar now thought proper to leave the fort in the dark of the night, and go to his brother at Ghazni unseen by the enemy.

Meanwhile Sherdil Khan was invited by Habib-ullah, and the quick-sighted Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, found that their union with each other would be injurious to his own advancement. He therefore left Ghazni for Kohistan, where he remained for a few months, making the chiefs his partisans, and thus prepared to render himself strong enough to encounter his united foes. Sherdil Khan was not less active in the city. He was intriguing to proclaim himself the principal chief, and to destroy Habib-ullah Khan, for whose assistance he had originally come. The latter's influence was merely a shadow of the nominal chiefship, while Sherdil Khan managed the affairs of government. He allowed thirty thousand rupees per month for his private expenses, and appointed Khodai Nazar Khan, his own maternal uncle, deputy governor in Kabul. His habits were tyrannical, and he very soon made the whole population disgusted with the existing rule of Sherdil. Many people began to hold correspondence

with the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and assured him of their co-operation in his behalf. The Sardar came to Kabul, and adopted his usually successful policy of adjusting matters by stratagem rather than with the sword. He asked for an interview with Sherdil, and after a long-continued discussion on the propriety and importance of the past and present conduct of each other, a new agreement was made, in which it was arranged that Sherdil Khan was to remain the paramount Lord of Kabul; while the Sardar was to keep the government of Ghazni, Maidan, and Kohistan, marrying at the same time the widow lady of Mohammed Azim Khan, with all her property. She was the daughter of Sadiq Khan Javan Sher, and the step-mother of Habib-ullah Khan. Although Sherdil was considered a braver man, as well as a shrewd diplomatic character, yet after all he could never penetrate into the deep-bottomed hypocrisy of the Sardar. He was quite senseless, indeed, not to apprehend the great influence which Dost Mohammed gained by his connexion with the widow lady. He obtained through this marriage quarters and friends among the very warlike and heroic Qizalbashes, where he could raise brave and numerous

cavalry, and where in adversity he could shelter himself against any of his powerful brothers.

After the conclusion of this agreement the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan thought that nothing could advance his interest farther than to cause a struggle in the town. He therefore presented a series of fictitious alarms relating to perfidious dangers from Habib-ullah to his new ally Sherdil Khan, and induced him at last to make the other his prisoner. The Sardar, to show his sincerity in the cause, counselled Sherdil that he should confine him also (the Sardar) with Habib-ullah, which will show the other party that they are not united, and which will thus give him the opportunity of promoting his pretensions secretly! This was accordingly done, and the mother of Habib-ullah Khan was exasperated as well as distressed at the custody of her son; and closing the gates of the Bala Hisar, she declared war against Sherdil. Thus happened what the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan wanted; and as Sherdil found himself in an awkward position, he asked counsel of the Sardar, then his prisoner, on mutual understanding. He was immediately released, made deputy governor under Sherdil, and commenced to negotiate

with the warrior-lady. He sent to her deputations repeatedly, and after assuring her, with his usual solemn oath, of his fidelity towards her, and promising her safe escort with her treasure, as well as the wealth of her son Habib-ullah, he succeeded in having the gates of the citadel opened, and lost no time in placing his guards on the different towers. On this Sherdil Khan immediately repaired to the Bala Hisar, and placing the widow lady of Mohammed Azim, the step-mother of Habib-ullah, on an elephant, sent her to Sardar, who married her according to the concealed agreement. The Sardar resolved not to violate the oaths he had made with the lady when she caused to be opened the gates of the Bala Hisar for him, and not to satisfy his perfidious avarice by plundering her himself; but he induced and gave opportunity to Sherdil Khan to do this, on the condition of equal shares in the spoil. The pillage took place accordingly, and went so far, that every woman of the family was searched and deprived even of her dress, if it was not torn. Sherdil possessed himself of the whole remaining mammon of the late Mohammed Azim Khan, and drove every member of the household of Habib-ullah

with infamy out of the citadel. Sherdil now became avaricious of this very considerable booty, and determined not to give even a little to the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, as had been originally stipulated. To effect this object of his imprudence, he sent off Habib-ullah Khan as prisoner into the distant fort of his Mama, and then contrived schemes to blind the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, if not to destroy him altogether. In the mean time the brothers, chiefs of Peshavar, also arrived in Kabul to take advantage of the disorder, and to share the riches if possible. Sherdil intended to seize the Sardar and perpetrate his deed of cruelty when he attends his court, but he was again informed of the plot, as before, by the motion of Haji Khan Kakar; and instantly leaving the presence of Sherdil, on the pretence of ablution, he rode off on his horse and came to his residence. This was the second time when the Sardar had a providential escape from his deadly enemies but pretended friends.

It was now evident that Sherdil Khan could not remain in the enjoyment of his ill-gotten power, as the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan could not be entrapped. The latter lost no time in collecting a

strong body of men at the expense of his new rich wife; and, exasperated at the faithless behaviour of Sherdil Khan, he insisted upon having his own will for the delivery of Habib-ullah Khan. He then laid siege to the Bala Hisar, and all the brother chiefs of Peshavar joined him with the view of enriching themselves from the plunder of the besieged. Sherdil Khan also sent an express to his brothers at Qandhar, intimating to them that he was possessed of considerable wealth, which, if he were not protected by those who were his real brothers, would fall into the hands of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan and the chiefs of Peshavar, and would make them extremely powerful in the family. This communication stirred up the chiefs, and they left Qandhar immediately for the purpose of defending their brother Sherdil Khan in Kabul. They arrived at length to aid the besieged, but the Sardar had surrounded the citadel so closely that provisions began to diminish; and in the mean time he sent a message to Sherdil Khan that the brave never shut themselves up in a house or fort, but come out and feel a proud desire either to fall or to gain in the open field. It is well known that Sherdil Khan was

really a person of great intrepidity, and braver than all the sons of Sarfraz Khan. This message stirred him up and he sallied out. Many days at first passed in skirmishes, and at last a general action was intended. Sherdil arrayed the line of his forces towards the tomb of Shah Shahid; and the Sardar, with the flower of his Qizalbash adherents, appeared on the opposite hillock, called Tappah Maranjan. The Qandhar chiefs, after reconnoitring the position of the Sardar, discovered that there would be only useless bloodshed in fighting with him while supported with such well-equipped cavalry and in possession of such a commanding position. Sherdil Khan, just like an Afghan, came into the camp of the Sardar, and stopped at the tent of the Navab Mohammed Zaman Khan. Counsel after counsel continued for many days, and the leaders of both parties were cherishing themselves on fruits and rich dinners together, while their respective followers were fighting for their employers in the field.

It would be tiresome to the reader to detail here the numerous treaties which were concluded and then violated, the struggles which were renewed and which again ceased,—oath after oath being exchanged, till

finally it was settled that the Navab Samad Khan should be empowered by both parties to adjust their differences. He proposed that neither Sherdil nor Dost Mohammed Khan should possess Kabul, which should be entirely left to be governed by the influential citizens, headed by the Sultan Mohammed Khan, one of the brother chiefs of Peshavar. It was further arranged that Sherdil Khan with his brothers must retire to Qandhar, and the Sardar to his government seat at Ghazni or Kohistan. This peace, however, was soon disturbed, for the followers of the Qandhar chiefs fell into a quarrel with those of the Sardar, and this ended not without much bloodshed. In the mean time, the widows of the late Mohammed Azim Khan deafened the ears of the hearers by shrieks, and begged the Sardar and the Navab to revenge on Sherdil Khan the insult and disgrace he had shown to the ladies of their deceased brother, demanded that he should be compelled to liberate their sons, Habib-ullah and Akram Khan. The Sardar again, exclusive of his other brothers, went and made a secret agreement with Sherdil Khan, that the Sardar will join him against any one who may attempt to impede his progress, or may wish to seize

his property which had belonged to Habib-ullah Khan, on the condition that Sherdil Khan will bind himself to assist the Sardar against the Peshavar chiefs, if necessary, and will give up his prisoners into his hands. On this Sherdil Khan loaded on beasts of burden all the moveable wealth from the Bala Hisar, and after delivering Habib-ullah Khan to the Sardar, set out for Qandhar.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan meanwhile knew that the brother chiefs of Qandhar and of Peshavar, in concurrence with each other, had established Sultan Mohammed Khan Governor of Kabul, with the view of having influence in the capital, and that he himself was set totally aside. Consequently he insisted upon leaving Habib-ullah Khan with Sultan Mohammed Khan on his part in the city; and he succeeded in doing so. Some time, however, passed before the Sardar could recruit his means and troops in Kohistan, and in the interval the death of Sherdil Khan happened. The talents and bravery of this chief of Qandhar were respected and dreaded by the Sardar, who now found that no one else remained in the family capable to frustrate his designs in any way. Sultan Mohammed Khan

was exceedingly partial to the citizens of the "Sunni" sect; and to counterbalance this, the Sardar took the "Shias," or Qizalbashes, under his wings; and he employed clandestinely emissaries to kindle religious misunderstanding and offences between the two parties. In the meantime Habib-ullah Khan left Kabul, annoyed with the treatment of Sultan Mohammed Khan, and this created a fine excuse for the hostilities of the Sardar.

Finally, the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan communicated to Sultan Mohammed the alternative to leave Kabul, or to be ready to fight with him. The latter, however, treated this message with ridicule, till the Sardar actually had opened a fire on the city. The citizens made a few skirmishes, and at length Sultan Mohammed Khan consented to evacuate Kabul; and so the Sardar entered the Bala Hisar by one gate, while the Sultan went out by another. The Sardar was now so fortunate as to be the sole sovereign of Kabul, where he ruled till the British Government dethroned him; and he is now again ruling where his English enemies could not govern. He was proud of having the chief seat and government of the capital of Afghanistan; but he was not

happy in his new position. He was sure that as soon as the brother chiefs of Qandhar and of Peshavar had no fear of attacks from Kam Ran and the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, they will not allow him to remain in the undisputed possession of Kabul. He therefore entered into correspondence with the fanatic Sayad Ahmad, who had raised a religious war on the Sikhs, in the Yusaf Zai country; and who kept the chiefs of Peshavar also engaged so as to prevent their attempts to disturb the Sardar. By this diversion of the attention of the Peshavar chiefs he had nothing to fear from the East; but his brothers on the South marched from Qandhar to oppose him. He thereupon led forth a large force, and met his antagonists near Qarabagh. A few skirmishes took place between the Kabul and Qandhar armies, which were obliged to fall back on their respective capitals by the sudden appearance of the cholera.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan made a discovery that Habib-ullah was intriguing with the ill disposed chiefs to supplant him from the throne of Kabul, and he thought the best and safest mode of putting off this impending danger, was to bribe and

induce the followers of Habib-ullah to desert their master, and to join him. He succeeded in this, and afterwards confiscated all his estate. Annoyed at this, he went over to the chiefs of Peshavar, where he received a district yielding one hundred and twenty thousand rupees for his support, yet after a year he quarrelled with them and returned again to Kabul. The Sardar, however, paid him no attention, and this induced him to go to Qandhar with all his family. Distress from want, and the neglect of the ruling uncles, broke and deranged his spirits, and he became quite insane. Even then he did not stop much longer there, notwithstanding the chiefs offered him twenty-five thousand rupees a-year for his maintenance, but he crossed the Ghoeleri range of mountains with his families, and on reaching the Esa Khail district near Derah Ismail Khan, he massacred all his wives and children, and threw them into the Indus. Such was the dreadful deed and sad fall of one who was once respected, flattered, and dreaded by the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, and by the other uncles.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan had not firmly established his authority in Kohistan, for robberies

and murders were still in practice, and some persons in existence there, who threatened death to his collectors and magistrates. He therefore assembled a select force, but, avoiding every occasion for the use of arms, he, with his natural sweetness of tongue, ensnared the ringleaders, as Nurak Shakardarari, Sayad Baba Qushqari, Zaman Istalafi and Mazu Tagavi, &c., assassinated them all, and forced the petty ones into banishment.

The inhabitants of Tagav, in the meantime, rebelled against the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan and subverted the tranquillity of the suburbs of Kabul. The Sardar collected a good force and placed over it the Navab Jabbar Khan to punish the rebels. The Navab remained for some time in Tagav negotiating with them, and thought that he will be able to settle the disturbance without having recourse to arms, but it proved to be quite contrary. The Tagavis made a night attack upon the Sardar's army, which, with its leader Navab Jabbar Khan, was defeated and dispersed. All the camp equipage fell into the hands of the rebels, and the remains of the forces returned successful to Kabul. This failure did not incense the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, but

created in him an apprehension that rebellion would soon appear on every side, if the honour of his arms was not recovered, and if the Tagavis were not punished.

CHAPTER V.

Haji Khan joins the Sardar—The Sardar punishes the rebels—Takes Bala Bagh and Jalalabad—Jealousy of the brothers—His escape from assassination—Marches against Shah Shuja—His letter to the British political agent at Loodianah—Sir Claude Wade's answer—The Sardar writes to Shah Shuja—Reaches Qandhar, and defeats Shah Shuja-ul-mulk — Correspondence discovered among the spoils—Ingratitude of the Qandhar chiefs towards Dost Mohammed Khan—The Sardar's interview with his dying brother—Flight and evil designs of the Peshavar chiefs—Haji Khan Kakar.

WHILE the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was making preparations for marching an army in person against Tagav, his principal and secret object was to subdue Bala Bagh, Jalalabad, and the people of Zurmat and of Bangash. The Sardar had at this time with him Haji Khan Kakar, a man of great treachery and hypocrisy, similar to himself. This person was formerly in the service of Habibullah Khan, and then in that of Sherdil Khan the Qandhar chief. He knew well that among all the brothers Dost Mohammed Khan was the only man to prosper, and therefore, on two former occasions

when he informed the Sardar of the plots which his (Haji) master had laid for blinding and killing him. Knowing also that at length the Sardar will gain the paramount power over the other brothers, he stole his escape from the camp of the Qandhar chief, his employer, and took shelter in the shrine of "Shah Ashqan Arefan," and pretended to be tired of this world, and to devote the remainder of this life for gaining the happiness of the next. The Qandhar chiefs did everything to induce him to follow them, but he seemed determined to retire from the world and live quiet in the mosque, yet this was merely a pretence. The Sardar went to him after the Qandhar chiefs went away, and persuaded him to quit the Mausoleum, and to co-operate with him for the aggrandisement of his power and of his country. Haji Khan accompanied the Sardar to his residence, and commenced a new career under a new master, as he had anticipated, and he will be found, on many occasions, to play a double part and to abound in treachery. Haji Khan advised the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan first to proceed towards Zurmat and Bangash; and, though the Sardar at first thought it not good to undertake this expedition, yet at length

it proved successful. He destroyed many rebellious forts, collected revenues, punished the refractory, and established peace and governors in that district. The cholera in the mean time spread and affected the Sardar; and fearful of the result, he returned to Kabul. Some time afterwards he declared war against Tagav, as he had originally intended. This declaration made Sultan Mohammed Khan and the other brothers alarmed on account of his increasing power, and they communicated to the Navab Mohammed Zaman Khan their earnest desire and urgent advice to make himself ready to oppose the Sardar, who after the conquest of Tagav would certainly subdue his country of Jalalabad. While the Navab was preparing for defence, repairing the fortress, and storing up provisions at Jalalabad for siege, the Sardar was engaged in razing the strongholds of the Tagav rebels. They fled to the mountains, and the Sardar possessed himself of their very considerable flocks, and of all their various quadrupeds. From that day no one from that country ever attempted to give him any offence, and the captured guns of the Navab Jabbar Khan were also restored to the Sardar.

The Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan now turned his attention to the projected conquest of Bala Bagh and of Jalalabad. The former was ruled by Mohammed Osman Khan, and the latter by the Navab Mohammed Zaman Khan. After a siege of two days, the chiefs of Bala Bagh surrendered, and then the fort of Jalalabad was invested by the forces of Dost Mohammed Khan. Here the siege continued for a few days, and then the Sardar commanded his Kohistan force to mine the fort. It was accordingly mined and blown up, when his army made an assault and captured Jalalabad. The Navab Mohammed Zaman Khan entered the room of his wife, who was the daughter of the late Vazir Fatah Khan, and thought himself safe under her protection. On this the Sardar gave orders to his son, Mohammed Akhbar Khan, to go in, seize, and conduct the good Navab to his presence. Regardless of the respect due to him, he forced the Navab to leave his lady's protection; and with no turban on his head he was conducted by Akbar Khan into the presence of his father, who brought him away and gave him as his state-prisoner a sufficient allowance to live upon.

It must be borne in mind that the daily increase of power and influence, and the aggrandisement of territory by the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan, was the source of the odious jealousy of his brothers, both old and young, the chiefs of Peshavar and of Qandhar. Knowing their own weakness they left and acknowledged him to be the master of Kabul, but yet they always murmured on account of the great expenses incurred by them on various occasions in proceeding to Kabul, and in restoring order there before the Sardar possessed it; and consequently they wrote to him to repay to them certain sums of money, and sometimes they asked for protection against Kam Ran and Ranjit. The Sardar always laughed at these reckless and murmuring demands for money and aid; but said, in reply, that he had nothing to give them, and that if it was convenient to him he will lend them military assistance against any real and general enemy. The Sardar Dost Mohammed found out that the Navab Jabbar Khan, instead of adjusting differences between him and the other chiefs, increased the difficulties for him by his unceasing intrigues with the malcontents. He thought best therefore to deprive him of the Ghilzai

ROYAL
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY

country, and to fix for him an adequate and respectable stipend in the city. He stated to the Navab he has received numerous complaints from his (Navab's) subjects, and that for the stability of his rapidly and progressively increasing government, he thinks to take up the administration of that district himself, and to provide for him in lieu of it by some other means. This made the Navab feel more hostility towards the Sardar, who had always been successful against the base conspiracies and intrigues of his brothers, of the Navab, &c. It has been said that while at Jalalabad the Sardar found a person armed and concealed at night in his private tent, who was bribed to murder him. The Sardar felt or rather heard the breathing of a man under his bed; and without making any noise, he got up in the manner as if he was to retire for a minute, and then to return to his bed immediately. He then very quietly took the arms from the guard at the door of his tent, and pointing the musket in the direction of his bed, he commanded the culprit to come out. He was seized, yet at the interference of the Navab, and of the Peshavar chiefs, he was pardoned, or else he would have been blown up by the firing of a gun.

It was immediately before or soon after the Sardar gained possession of Jalalabad, that the Shah Shuja, the ex-king of Kabul, appeared and raised an army at Sindh, with the intention to try to recover from his repeated failures of fortune in recovering his dominions and invading Qandhar; but the chiefs of this place wrote and applied for the assistance of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan. He knew that if he was not to proceed at their call, his brothers will not be able to oppose and to frustrate the designs of the Shah, who if once in the possession of that city, would place him in a most dangerous situation in Kabul; and he therefore prepared an army, to start forth with it towards Qandhar. The Navab Jabbar Khan, with the rest of the discontented chiefs, was in correspondence with Shah Shuja, who had agreed to restore the Ghilzai district to him, and in like manner to restore Jalalabad and Bala Bagh to their respective masters, the Navab Mohammed Zaman and Usman Khan; and they had resolved to join the Shah, when the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan arrives suddenly before the Shah's camp at Qandhar. The Navab was of opinion that Shah Shuja had resolved to recover his lost kingdom under the auspices

of the English government, and he had inculcated a similar belief into others. To effect the purpose of his intrigues, or to secure his profit, he planned of course numerous schemes, and at last on arriving at Ghazni he supplicated the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan to allow him to go on with his plans and to make some favourable terms with the Shah for him, as he was sure that he (the Shah) would at last be victorious. The Sardar, knowing that the Navab wished to go over to the Shah, and believing that then all the chiefs from his own camp and from the Qandhar camps would follow his example, leaving him alone in the field, replied thus: "Lala,* there will be plenty of time for your negotiations if I be defeated."

Dost Mohammed Khan thought it advisable to ascertain whether this expedition of Shah Shuja (as rumour described it) was framed by the desire of the British government; and he therefore addressed a letter to Sir Claude Wade, then political agent at Loodianah, and requested that functionary to inform him whether the Shah was supported by the English

* An affectionate term for addressing personally to a brother, and sometimes to a very intimate friend.

government to invade Afghanistan, or was marching thither on his own account only. He added, that if the former was the case, he would take all these matters into his own deliberate consideration; and if the latter, that he was on the way to meet the Shah with arms. Sir Claude Wade replied that the British government had no participation in this expedition of the king against the Barakzai chiefs, but that he wishes him well. Dost Mohammed Khan dispatched also a letter to Shah Shuja, saying that his brothers, the chiefs of Qandhar, are not capable to meet the wishes of his Majesty, and that he (the Sardar) is making rapid marches, and trusts to settle all differences satisfactorily. This mode of writing seemed to promise that he will fight with and defeat the Shah, which his brothers at Qandhar were unable to do. The Sardar had also written to Gulistan Khan, the Hazarah chief of Qara Bagh, to reinforce him against Shah Shuja; although he had one year before shown designs of revolt, but had not actually taken up the cause of the Shah. Whether he did not or could not spread dissensions in favour of the monarch, is a matter of investigation; yet it is evident that he made a very fair excuse for not accom-

panying the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan to Qandhar. He stated that he was moving with followers for the assistance of the Sardar, and on the road met some Afghan maliks,* with their heads cut on their shoulders, who advised him not to proceed; but he paid no attention to them, thinking that probably they wished to mislead him by false advice. He continued marching on, he said, till he met Mir Yazdan-bakhsh,† with his head also in his hand, who cried out and said to me, "Oh unfortunate man! where are you going? Do you wish to fall into the mouth of a serpent? Is not this head disunited from my shoulders a warning to you?" The chief added, that when he heard the above words from the lips of a Hazarah, he could not hesitate a moment to disbelieve him; and that he therefore was obliged to go back to his home with his followers, and thought it safest not to accompany the Sardar. The most remarkable thing in the Hazarah's answer is, that he showed his Afghan ruler (by mentioning the Afghan and the Hazarah men with their heads cut in their hands) that the Sardar being an Afghan was not to

* Head men of the villages.

† Whose account will hereafter be found.

be believed, and that therefore he could not trust himself to him.

On arriving at Qandhar the Sardar thought it prudent to fight at once with Shah Shuja-ul-mulk, rather than allow his troops to recover from the fatigue of their rapid marches. He was wise enough to know the duplicity of certain chiefs and relations in his camp, and thought even the least delay might mature their intrigues and induce them to abandon him. Shah Shuja-ul-mulk had occupied a very strong post opposite to the city, but his vanity, and the idea of securing a safe route, excited him to quit his entrenched camp and to choose another place for battle in spite of his wiser counsellor, Samandar Khan. Dost Mohammed Khan on his side made the disposition of his army, and the plan for attacking the Shah; and he placed his son, Mohammed Akhbar Khan (renowned as the murderer of the late Sir William Macnaghten, the British Envoy), at the head of his well-mounted cavalry; and the infantry was commanded by Nayab Abdul Samad Khan,* as

* A Persian adventurer, who came into Bombay as a horse merchant, and thence went to Sultan Mohammed Khan at Peshavar. He entered his service, and raised a regiment of

well as by his other sons. Dost Mohammed Khan, being always the first for cunning in Afghanistan, now desired to know, and tried to find by some hypocritical manœuvre, whether the troops that were with him had any design to support him or to abandon him. He drew his sword consequently, and galloped forward as a general towards the enemy. He had not proceeded more than fifty yards when he stopped to find whether the troops followed him with or without hesitation. He then looked at his forces, and what he read from their countenances it is impossible to say; but he ordered Mohammed Akbar Khan to make an immediate attack with his cavalry. The battle was very hard fought, and the infantry of the Shah, under Mr. Campbell, though in a very weak state, made a brave resistance. It defeated at once the Barakzai force, and the chiefs entered the city of Qandhar. Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan was,

infantry. Afterwards he fled to Kabul, and received a similar command under Dost Mohammed Khan. He continued with him for some years, and then finding his position dangerous he stole his escape to Bokhara, and gained the favour of an infantry regiment from the half-mad monarch, the Amir of Bokhara, where his proceedings in regard to the British authorities shall be mentioned in their proper place.

however, still keeping his post, and Mohammed Akbar Khan causing great havoc by his cavalry and by his intrepidity amid the line of the Shah. The Sardar having discovered that the army of the Sadozais with the Shah was gaining, and his brothers the Qandhar chiefs had retreated into the fort; determined either to lose or to gain, he, with his son, Mohammed Akbar Khan, made a general attack upon his Majesty, and after a desperate resistance and loss they at last succeeded to defeat and disperse the army of the enemy. The weak but brave regiment under Mr. Campbell was still in the engagement, and at last surrendered when it was known that Shah Shuja with his Khavanins (nobles) had run away, and that their commander, Mr. Campbell, had fallen wounded on the field. He was taken prisoner by Dost Mohammed Khan, and was handsomely treated by him. All the tents, guns, and camp equipage of the ever fugitive Shah Shuja, fell into the hands of the Lion of Afghanistan, and a large bundle of the papers and correspondence of various chiefs in his country with the Shah. Among these he found many letters under the real or forged seal of Sir Claude Wade to the address of certain chiefs, stating that any assistance

given to Shah Shuja shall be appreciated by the British government.

Nayab Abdul Samad Khan, the commander of the infantry of Dost Mohammed Khan, had sent a letter to the Shah by his own orderly; and when detected, he (the orderly) was blown up by a gun to prevent the disclosure of his master's intrigues with the Shah.

The chiefs of Qandhar prepared to pursue and seize the person of the fugitive king, and begged the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan for leave to do the same. He replied that he would not take the trouble to pursue the Shah; but that he would be delighted to get possession of Shah Zadah Mohammed Akhbar, the son of the fugitive Shah by his own sister, whom in time of necessity he could make a useful instrument, and under his royal shadow advance his own interest. It was evident that the defeat of the Shah and the preservation of the Qandhar chiefship was owing to the active intrepidity and brisk assistance of the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan; and yet the chiefs, forgetful of this cause for gratitude, began to treat the wishes of their champion with contemptible neglect and disinterestedness. They boasted of their

superiority and bravery, after the battle had been fought and gained by him for them, and even did not trust him so far as to enter the city of Qandhar. Perhaps herein they were influenced by the remembrance of the mode and success of his stratagem in taking possession of the fort of Ghazni; and thus were mistrustful of his designs, and too fearful of the probable consequences to allow him to come into the citadel.

The prospect of appearing disorders in Kohistan, and the cold treatment he received from the chiefs of Qandhar, as also the arrival of the unwelcome intelligence of the serious illness of his brother, Amir Mohammed Khan, compelled the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan to return to his capital, Kabul. On the road he thought it prudent and politic to connect himself with the Tukhi Ghilzai chief, and he proposed the connexion and instantly married his sister, in order to make an addition to the circle of his wives, and at the same time to establish confidence in the Ghilzai chief. When he reached Kabul he found his dear brother, Amir Mohammed Khan, just breathing his last. He was able only to say to his brother the Sardar what he had purposed to do,

for the selling his old grain from Ghazni, and for storing up the new crop; and desired him to see that the money is received, and that all sorts of pecuniary matters are duly settled, for these he was ever most passionately fond of.

Before we make mention of the preparations made for his next expedition, it would be necessary to describe the circumstances which led to it. While the Sardar Dost Mohammed was engaged at Qandhar, his brothers the Peshavar chiefs, Sultan and Pir Mohammed Khan, were deprived of the government at Peshavar by the Sikh army; they were compelled to return and take refuge at Jalalabad. They were led to believe that the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan would be routed by Shuja, which would give them an opportunity to gain possession of Kabul, and they had actually sent and placed their own governors in some of the districts; but the news came that the Shah was defeated, and that the Sardar was returning successful. This was, to be sure, sad tidings for them, which destroyed all their prospects and all the castles the deposed chiefs, the brothers of Peshavar, had built in the air. In the mean time, showing

the usual fraudulent character of an Afghan, they fired a salute to celebrate the victory at Qandhar, and accused their own officers of taking the possession or the management of certain villages belonging to the Sardar, pretending that it was contrary to their wish and order. They proceeded towards Kabul, and went to meet the victorious Dost Mohammed Khan on his way back from Qandhar. The interview was nothing apparently but indicative of cordiality and brotherly unanimity. Here it is worthy of notice that the double-game player Haji Khan Kakar bowed lowly to him. This will show the feelings and disregard of honour characteristic to an Afghan, while having no shame or repentance for his past ill conduct, but repeatedly committing himself to similar disgraces and making excuses if necessary. This person had deserted Sherdil Khan to join the Sardar, and then deserted the latter to connect himself with the Peshavar chiefs, who were now deposed; yet his personal safety was secure as being under their protection. In the meeting, however, the Sardar said to this deserter that it was evident that his brothers of Peshavar could expect little good from him after

his past conduct towards himself; to which Haji Khan replied, that if he had deserted him he had gone to his brother, and not to any Sikhs or other strangers.

CHAPTER VI.

Preparations for a new expedition against the Sikhs—Design of the Sardar to assume the Royal title—He is surnamed Amir-ul-momnin—His method of procuring money—Barbarity exercised towards a rich trader—New coinage—The Sikhs depute Dr. Harlan to Sultan Mohammed Khan—The Amir is incensed, and threatens Dr. Harlan—He encamps at Shekhan—Truce with the Sikhs—The Amir's treacherous designs—His violent altercation with Pir Mohammed Khan—His plans and counsellors—Ranjit Singh arrives, and sends an embassy to the Amir—Oath of friendship between the Amir and Sultan Mohammed Khan—The Amir seizes the Sikh envoys—Breaks up his camp—Sultan Mohammed takes the captive envoys with him—Rage of the Amir.

THE Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan stated on his return from Qandhar, that he had got rid of one enemy in the person of Shah Shuja, now defeated, but another was powerfully wounding his heart and honour by the constant turn of affairs, and by the remembrance of the inroads made by an infidel into the Mahomedan land. In this he alluded to the conquest and possessions of the Sikh army at Peshavar; he planned to declare a religious war, in the view that having no money himself to levy troops, he

OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ASIATIC

AMIR DOST MAHOMED KHAN.

could hardly persuade the people to take up his cause; whereas, under the name of a war for the sake of religion, he might be successful. The priests were accordingly consulted, and all the chiefs, as well as his counsellors, and Mirza Sami Khan, concurred in the opinion that the Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan should assume the royal title, and proclaim himself as king; because the religious wars, fought under the name and flag of any other than a king, cannot entitle the warriors to the rights and honours of martyrdom, when they fall in the field. The Sardar was not altogether disinclined to assume royalty; but the want of means to keep up that title, and the unanimous disapproval of his relations, prevented him from adopting the name of a king. The Sultan Mohammed Khan was so jealous of the Sardar's taking the royal title, that he left Kabul on the pretence of going to Bajaur. In the meantime the Sardar, without any preparation or feast, went out of the Bala Hisar with some of his courtiers; and in "Idgah" Mir Vaiz, the head priest of Kabul, put a few blades of grass on the head of the Sardar, and called him "Amir-ul-momnin," or, Commander of the faithful.

The change of title from Sardar to the higher grade of Amir-ul-momnin, made no change nor produced any effect upon the habits, conduct, and appearance of Dost Mohammed Khan, except that he became still plainer in attire, and in talk, and easier of access. The only difference we find now is that of addressing him from this time as Amir. Before the Amir came to the final determination of extortion, the head priest, Khan Mulla Khan, satisfied him by saying that it was not contrary to the Mahomedan law to snatch money from infidels, such as Hindu bankers, if it was disbursed amongst warriors of the true faith. As the Amir was really in pecuniary wants, and had the sanction of the priest, he therefore seized all the Shikarpuri merchants, and demanded three lakhs of rupees from them. The Amir sent openly, as well as clandestinely, his confidential men into all parts of the country, who spared no time in forcing the payment of the demands of their employer; and where he had given orders to raise a certain sum from certain bankers of a district, the persons employed on this occasion did not forget to fill their own pockets besides. Those who fell into the hands of these official ban-

ditti were tortured and deprived of their health before they would part with their wealth; and those who escaped suffered by the confiscation of their moveable property. Sham-shuddin Khan at Ghazni, Mohammed Usman Khan at Balabagh, and Mohammed Akbar in Jalalabad, as well as the other petty governors of the various small districts, received instructions from the Amir to follow his example in seizing and torturing, and thus depriving the wealthy of their money. This method of extortion did not remain limited in application for the infidels alone, but gradually it involved the Mahomedans. In the city many principal persons suffered, and among them a rich trader of the name of Sabz Ali, who was commanded to pay thirty thousand rupees, and having refused the payment of so large a sum, he was confined in prison, and torture of every horrid description was inflicted on him by the Amir. Some days he was branded on his thighs, and on other days, cotton, dipped in oil, was tied over his fingers, and burnt as a torch; and after many days of agony the poor man expired. On this occasion the Amir only uttered a word, that he wanted his money and not his death; which, how-

ever, could not make him a loser, for he forced the relatives of this victim to pay, and thus obtained this sum. The whole country at this time was an appalling picture of extortion and torture, and he continued to spread havoc all around till a sum of five lakhs of rupees was thus unjustly gathered up for the religious war of the faithful.

The title and the money were now provided for the Amir, but another conversation took rise amongst the learned Mirzas of the court before the "Commander of the faithful" could march; and it was discussed what words or verse should be struck with the name of the Amir on the coin. Numerous persons of skill in verse exhibited specimens of their own composition, and the one which Mirza Sami Khan, the prime minister, formed, at length succeeded in being struck on the coinage. The gold coin was scarce, but many pieces of silver and copper were circulated, bearing the stamp of Dost Mohammed Ghazi. The value of the silver was twelve sharis, each of which was formed of the value of five copper pence.

Intelligence of these preparations for a religious expedition by the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan

against the Sikhs reached Peshavar; and the Maharajah Ranjit Singh deputed Dr. Harlan* to the Sultan Mohammed Khan, who was not on good terms with the Amir, hoping that by gaining him over to himself he would succeed in making a division in the Mahomedan camp. This did not escape the notice of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, who dispatched the Navab Jabbar Khan with the view to frustrate the designs of the Sikh mission, and to induce the Sultan Mohammed Khan to join his camp with the Bajaur militia. On the arrival of the Amir the Navab joined him with the Sultan Mohammed Khan, and with Dr. Harlan from Bajaur. It was now evident that the Sultan Mohammed was bought by Dr. Harlan for the Sikhs, and therefore the Amir accused him sharply for interfering and causing differences between his brother Sultan Mohammed and himself. Dr. Harlan found that he was not in a safe position after being suspected by the camp followers, and accused by the Amir, whom he could not induce to listen to him like the Sultan Mohammed Khan. He therefore went at night to

* An American gentleman.

the Amir with the "Qoran," as a token of supplication; and next day he considered himself fortunate to get permission to pass safely to the Sikh camp at Peshavar. The Amir quitted Dakka, and encamped at Shekhan, in the plain of Peshavar, opposite to the mouth of the Khaibar pass.

The Maharajah Ranjit Singh had not then arrived, and is said to have sent orders to his general to lull the designs of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan by exchange of negotiations until he himself joins the camp; and these were accordingly commenced. The Navab Jabbar Khan and Agha Husain were the negotiators of the Amir, who had enjoined the latter to watch the former. The Agha was found to be bribed by the Sikhs to cause a truce; and at length the Sultan Mohammed Khan went to the Sikh camp, and became a medium for maintaining the truce until the arrival of the Maharajah. Meanwhile the Amir had refused to give the Government of Peshavar to Sultan Mohammed, whether it were taken by arms or obtained by negotiations; and he was likewise denied when he proposed to have Jalalabad. He therefore now thought that it was right,

and that he was free to seek for his own interests while in the Sikh camp.

The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan was sensible of his own danger, from the presence of his discontented brother in the enemy's camp; and, contrary to the rules of the truce, he clandestinely stirred up some of the Ghazis to attack the Sikhs with the most foul and dishonest view, namely, to endanger his life. There were, in consequence of this, several desultory assaults made by the Afghans, who brought some heads from the enemy's side, along with some little plunder from their tents. The Sikh army only waited the attacks, and thus obeyed the commands of the Maharajah to stand on the defensive. Pir Mohammed Khan, brother of Sultan Mohammed Khan, who had remained in the camp of the Amir, pretending to be unwell, now waited on him, with a drawn dagger in his hand, and threatened to stab it into his own breast, adding his own opinion of the baseness of his act in causing this hostility in spite of the existing truce; alleging that it would excite the Sikh general to cut the head off his brother in retaliation. The Amir replied, and even swore falsely, as usual, that he had never given any such

directions, and that he had no control over the Ghazis—the champions of the true faith. However, he affected to say that they should preserve the truce, while in the mean time he excited their avarice by pointing out to them the golden bangles which will fall into their hands by killing a Sikh soldier. The advanced guard was changed every day by the Amir; and when Pir Mohammed Khan's turn came, the Amir commenced negotiation with the Sikh of such a tenour that a severe conflict occurred;—but Pir Mohammed Khan being a good soldier, as well as commander, behaved bravely, and said that that atrocious scoundrel (the Amir) had brought a heavy calamity upon him, but that he had got well out of it.

It was not an easy task for the Amir to decide what course to pursue. His prime minister, Mirza Sami Khan, supported by Mohammed Afzal Khan and a few other chiefs, was advising the Amir to wage war; and Abdul Samad, the commander of his infantry, stated boastingly that he would defeat the whole Sikh army with his own regiments, and would bring Avitabile prisoner. On the other hand the Navab Jabbar Khan, considering the

MIRZA ABDÚL SAMEH KHAN.

superiority of the enemy, proposed to retire without the hazard of battle, and the Amir wisely agreed with him.

Meanwhile the Maharajah Ranjit Singh arrived in the camp from Lahaur, and his appearance gave fresh and bold spirits to the Sikhs. He lost no time in arranging the troops and the plan of attack, if necessary; but at the same time he sent his confidential physician or minister, Faqir Aziz-uddin, along with Dr. Harlan and the Sultan Mohammed Khan, to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, with the message either to retire or to fight. While the agents were conferring with the Amir, intelligence was brought that the Sikh army had already surrounded the Afghans with a heavy park of artillery, and that there was no chance of success by waging war, but of much good by retreat. However, the Amir was fearful that his followers might become disorderly at sounding the retreat, and then he might lose his guns and ammunition, which would reduce him to the level of his rival relations, as Mohammed Zaman Khan, &c. He consulted at this crisis with his minister Mirza Sami Khan, and during the conversation he fixed on a scheme for carrying

off the Faqir Aziz-uddin and Dr. Harlan, the Sikh agents, to Kabul. He thought that this arrangement would compel the Maharajah to give up Peshavar, or at any rate a very large sum, for the ransom of the Faqir, without whom the veteran ruler of the Panjab could not live. The Amir, however, thought at the same time that this act of seizing the envoys would bring an everlasting disgrace on him, and therefore he resolved to gain his object by casting the odium on the head of his brother the Sultan Mohammed Khan. He sent for him, therefore, and referring to all past misunderstandings and discord between them, he made a new engagement; and swearing on the Qoran, he solemnly bound himself to maintain a perpetual friendship and brotherhood. The Sultan Mohammed Khan learnt and knew immediately that the intention of the Amir was to gain the persons of the envoy at the expense of his disgrace, yet he feigned, and also swore, to adhere to the wishes and plans of the Amir. The latter gave up the charge of the Faqir and Dr. Harlan to him, stating his wish to keep them as hostages till the Maharajah restores half the territory of the Peshavar to him, and sends a sum of money besides for his

own expense, proclaiming at the same time that he had not come to fight with the Maharajah, on whom he looks in the light of a father, but to establish peace with him for the future. The Sikh envoy begged in vain to permit him to return to the Maharajah in the first place for the purpose of informing his Highness of the agreement he had concluded with the Amir; but the latter replied that this can easily be done by means of a letter.

The camp of the Afghans was now broken up, and the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan used great caution and exertion to see that his guns and ammunition had passed safe to the mouth of the Khaibar, but he could not prevent the Ghazis from plundering the bazar and his own camp equipage. When he was quite safe and far within the valley he heard the firing of cannons from the Sikh camp, in their rejoicing at his flight. The Amir, believing that he had treacherously secured his game in the persons of Faqir Aziz-uddin and Dr. Harlan, the Sikh envoys, and that they were following him in the custody of the Sultan Mohammed Khan, turned his face towards the Sikh camp, ridiculed their firing, and expressed his own pride that he had carried off

the soul (the Faqir) of Ranjit Singh. In this, however, he himself was the person deceived. In the mean time he continued his march; and the Sultan Mohammed Khan, conscious of the evil intentions of the Amir, and having a favourable opportunity to gain the kindness and attachment of the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, conducted the envoys, the prisoners of the Amir, to his own camp, instead of securing them in that of Dost Mohammed Khan. At night the Amir encamped at Jabar-ghi, and next morning made inquiries where his brother the Sultan Mohammed Khan had put up with the Sikh envoys. No one could find him or them in the camp, but still the Amir continued his search. Meanwhile the arrival of a messenger from the Sultan Mohammed Khan was announced, and a letter was delivered to him. The contents were a tissue of violent abuse; and after naming him the most faithless and the most treacherous, with everything which was bad, threatened to attack his country if he would not instantly send his guns and his brother Pir Mohammed Khan. This appalling news wounded the feelings of the Amir most bitterly. There were no bounds to the sweat of shame and folly which flowed over his face,

and there was no limit to the laughter of the people at his being deceived and ridiculed. His minister Mirza Sami Khan was so much distressed by this sad exposure of his own trick, and still more by the failure of his plan in losing the Faqir, that he hung down his head with great remorse and shame, and then throwing away his state papers, he exclaimed that he would avoid all interference in the government affairs hereafter. In a tone of anger he stated to his master that his conduct was very unwise, and that he did not pay attention to his counsel when he advised him to fight with the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, adding, that his followers, the Ghazis, will never believe him that he had any intention of carrying on a religious war, and that none in future will come to support him. After a long-continued talk about right and wrong, and in referring to past intercourse with the Sikh camp, the Amir marched towards Kabul, and could neither keep his followers in order nor persuade them to allow him to review and thank them before they should depart for their respective districts. Such was the termination of the religious war of the commander of the faithful in Afghanistan. It commenced with extortion and

oppression, and ended in an expensive rendezvous, gaining nothing but contempt and the ridiculous title of "Amir" to add to the name of Dost Mohammed Khan.

CHAPTER VII.

Difficult situation of the Amir—Duplicity of the Qandhar chiefs —The Amir designs to seize some nobles—His plan betrayed by Akhundzadah—He arrests Abdullah Khan Achakzai—Releases him—Sisters of the Amir—Saddu Khan murdered by a Kohistani bribed by his wife.

THE Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, after returning to Kabul, was not easy in his mind, nor was his authority respected. Theft, plunder, slaughter, disobedience to him, were the predominant features of the time. He always indulged in the idea that he was betrayed by his own relations and brothers, in the late expedition against the Sikhs; and that in consequence of their increasing treachery he could not execute his wishes in the arrangement of the affairs of his own government. He was also surrounded by many chiefs and followers of the Sultan Mohammed Khan, who from the time that Peshavar fell into the hands of the Sikh rulers, had sought for maintenance from the Amir. He did not know how to restore confidence into his former adherents, and

to provide for the newly arrived Khavanins.* He communicated all these difficulties to the brother chiefs of Qandhar, and they sent their confidential "Mashir," Counsellor Mulla Rashid Akhundzadah, apparently to promote the interests of the Amir, but secretly instructed and advised to counteract them. This Counsellor arrived at Kabul, and by his famous possession and practice of hypocrisy, gained the entire confidence of the Amir, for he gave ready approbation and compliance to all his measures. The first object of Dost Mohammed Khan was to reduce the number and allowances of his former dependants, so that he might be able to support the Peshavar arrivals; and every one groaned at the appearance and application of this project, and above all there were no bounds to the hard and ill language of Haji Khan Kakar. The Amir then planned to seize his relations, with a great many other men of rank, and, after getting rid of them, finally to establish his own authority. His minister, Mirza Sami Khan, prepared a list of the persons who were to be imprisoned, and whose property was to be confiscated. He went himself into the country

* Petty chiefs.

on the excuse to look after his estate, but in reality to keep himself free from the odium of taking an apparent share in the plot; if it proved successful he would appear to be perfectly unaware of its existence, and if it failed, he would become a mediator to restore peace and order. While the minister thus secured his own object, Mulla Rashid, who was daily becoming more and more a confidant of the Amir's plot, was not forgetful of his own peculiar benefit. He kept the opposite party alert, and acquainted with the proceedings of Dost Mohammed Khan, whose secrets and confidence he possessed. He filled his own coffers with the presents which he received from the Navab Jabbar Khan, and from the relations of the Amir and other chiefs about him, for betraying the secrets he knew, and making them watchful of impending dangers from his conspiracy. When the Amir thought that the plan was mature, and time had arrived to secure the fruits of his perfidy, he sat with a dismal and anxious countenance waiting for his confidential accomplice, Akhundzadah. Hereupon the latter appeared, and, throwing his turban before him on the ground, feigned to pluck at his own beard; and in a fearful and agitated tone

of voice explained to the Amir that his relations, the Navab, &c. have in some way been informed of his plot laid against them, and have collected their respective followers to frustrate his designs. The penetrating Amir instantly knew that the Akhundzadah was the very first person who made the opposite party acquainted with his proceedings; and he wrathfully showered a heavy load of abuse on his head, calling him a traitor coming from Qandhar to destroy his measures instead of furthering them. The Akhundzadah, by remaining quiet, pacified the furious Dost Mohammed, and then gradually began to advise him by saying that his violence in such critical circumstances was perfectly childish, and would probably produce serious injury by making it manifest that he had really conspired for the ruin of his brothers and relations, who, being alarmed and losing confidence in him, will then join to upset him. Whether the counsel of the double-faced Akhundzadah, or the necessity of the time, moved the Amir to swallow his own repentance, we cannot say, but it is certain that he instantly waited upon his brothers, and pretended to be uneasy in his inquiries for the reason of assembling their retinue,

and assuming a warlike aspect. He commenced his old and accustomed series of false excuses in a garb of solemnity, with an oath that he had never thought of any deliberate treachery against them. The plot which he had planned, he said, was to get hold of Abdullah Khan Achakzai, with his property, and not to injure them. He thus cleared himself of the suspicion of his relations, and then set about to make schemes to seize and gain possession of the person and wealth of the Achakzai chief. He instructed his wives to send an invitation to the whole number of the females of Abdullah Khan; who, of course, will come as usual adorned with jewels, of which he will deprive them without any difficulty. He also directed Mohammed Akbar Khan to send for the chief personally, on pretence of consulting him about some state affairs, and when in the room to seize him immediately, accusing him that he has been corresponding and intriguing with the Prince of Hirat, the enemy of the Barakzai family, whom he serves. This measure proved successful, the Achakzai chief was apprehended, and his horses and property confiscated. Now, however, the Amir discovered that his expectations are not realized, and that

all he had gained by this act of treachery, the seizure of Abdullah Khan, was nothing but a few horses, old carpets, and worn-out furniture. He thereupon thought that the odium and disgrace was heavier on his head than these things are worth, and therefore he set the chief at liberty, restoring to him his plundered property.

It has been stated before that the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan had only one brother, named Amir Mohammed Khan; and here we speak of his four sisters, because their character and deportment is worthy of notice. The eldest one was married to Shah Shuja-ul-mulk when in possession of the kingdom. She had four royal children, three daughters and one son.* The second was forced to be wife of Abdul Amin Khan Tobschibashi, at the time when she, with her mother, brothers, and sisters, were in distress on the murder of their father Sarfraz Khan. The Tobschibashi had by her seven children, and one of them was Abdul Rashid Khan.† Abdul Rasul Khan married the

* He was named Shahzadah Akbar, and died when the Shah was placed by the British on the throne of Kabul.

† He was bought by me to desert Haidur Khan at Ghazni,

third sister, who has four sons. She is a widow, and known by the name of the mother of Madad Khan. This lady resembles very much her brother the Amir of Kabul, and bears an enterprising character. She used every exertion to induce our authorities to allow her, with her other sister, to remain in Kabul, after the whole family of the Amir were sent prisoners to India. She was aware that her brother, though an exile in Toorkistan, might return, and that then a general commotion would arise in the country. With this view she continued to pay her visit to all the principal chiefs in the country, and when the Amir appeared fighting with us in Bamian and Kohistan, she was day and night engaged in marching from one village to another, and in supplicating the head men of the place, with the holy "Qoran" in her hand, to rise against us, the infidels,—and to join her brother, the Commander of the Faithful. When the Amir surrendered, she made a wonderful escape to Jalalabad, and thence to

and came to the late Sir Alexander Burnes: his services were appreciated by Lord Keane and by Major Thomson, the engineer officer, in the capture of that fort, and rewarded by a pension of five hundred rupees.

Peshavar, in spite of our exertions to detect her while intriguing. Her conduct in other respects is not altogether without suspicion. The fourth sister of Dost Mohammed Khan was married to Saddu Khan, and had one daughter and one son, Mohammed Hasan Khan. Neither the behaviour of the husband nor wife was free from rebuke. His habits were very objectionable and mean. He was always stupified with opium and with all sorts of intoxicating things. His conduct towards his own daughter was unfather-like, brutal, and odiously abominable; and such, that at last it compelled him to take her far from the capital, and to put an end to her existence. He was passionate and dissipated, and his wife was equally regardless of the virtuous modesty of her own sex. She bribed a Kohistani to murder her own husband!! and while he was returning from a visit to the Amir at night he was shot in the Shor Bazar, and the culprit was seized. The Amir made the necessary investigations, and inquired after the reason which led him to assassinate a person of Saddu Khan's position, being a relative to himself. The guilty man replied that he had been desired to do this by his own wife, the sister of the Amir,

who promised him a large reward, adding that he never dreamt that such a bold and desperate step of a female against her own comforter of life—her husband, would have originated in herself; but that, undoubtedly, there were some political circumstances which must have obliged the Amir to ask his sister to cause the annihilation of her own husband. The Amir made no further questions, and appeared sadly ashamed of his sister's conduct, while surrounded by the courtiers. However, he ordered the guilty one to be executed, and he was hanged near the gate of the Bala Hisar.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Amir fears the Hazarahs—History of Yazdan Bakhsh—Dost Mohammed's plan for seizing the Hazarah chief—Courage and devotion of his wife—Both are seized by the Amir—They negotiate for their release—The Mir escapes, and afterwards his wife—He consolidates his power—Haji Khan and Mir Yazdan Bakhsh—The Khan plans the ruin of the Hazarah Mir—His scheme to entrap him—Fails—He makes Haji Khan Governor of the Hazarahjat—Becomes suspicious of him—Haji Khan seizes Mir Yazdan Baksh—Plunder of the Hazarahs—The Mir is strangled—The Sardar's relations with Persia—His education—He humbles his rival relatives, and increases his own power—Disgrace of Haji Khan—The Amir's administration of justice.

It has been briefly described in the commencement of the elevation and fame of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan that his career was marked with deeds of tragedy and perfidious bloodshed in Kohistan, and that he had no cause to be alarmed from that quarter, except that he was not free from the fear of a Hazarah chief of extraordinary character named Mir Yazdan Bakhsh. To shorten the history of his descent, and of the superiority and destruction of his

elder brothers and rivals, it may be sufficient to say that he was the younger son of Mir Vali Beg of Karzar, who was slain by a petty chief. On the death of his father, the eldest son Mir Mohammed Shah became the master of Behsud; Mir Yazdan Bakhsh assembled a large force, and prepared to revenge the wrongs of his family on the assassin of his father,—and he apprehended him and slew him on the very spot where the blood of his own father had been shed. His attention was now turned to subvert his elder brother, whom he defeated, and he then made himself the principal chief or Mir of Behsud. The more he grew in power in his Hazarah tribe, and extended his territorial possessions, the more did apprehensions arise in the mind of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. He justly thought that the Golam Khanah, a powerful body in Kabul, are connected by the ties of their faith with the Shia sect and with the valiant Mir of the Hazarah; and that as they were principally the instruments of his prosperity, they might turn against him and join the Mir to seek his adversity and destruction, and he found no other way to entrap the object of his apprehension but to cultivate for himself a deeper

confidence in the Shias of Kabul. He accordingly showed them all attention and civility, and at length persuaded them to establish a closer alliance between him and the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh by his visit to Kabul. He wrote all the sacred oath and solemn obligations of swearing on the Holy Qoran, and affixing his own seal to it, he assured the Mir of his personal safety and respectable treatment, and the Shias of Kabul became responsible for the veracity of the engagement. When the Besut Mir received that communication of the Amir, guaranteed by the people of his own creed, he prepared to set out for the city. One of his wives, however, the daughter of a Dehzangi chief, dissuaded him from such a hazardous visit. She was a woman of the most extraordinary qualifications and natural powers of mind. „She used to put on a masculine robe, and ornamented herself with a sword and shield, a bow and arrows, a spear, a dagger, and a matchlock. She appeared in the field of battle with her husband, and shared the laurels by his side: thus, at home, she gave her lord comfort and counsel,—and in the field of battle she killed his enemies. Being wiser than himself in doubting the

fidelity of the Afghans, she always advised him not to trust himself to them. On this occasion she found that she could not succeed in forbidding her husband to accept the invitation; and, therefore, with her usual attachment and boldness, she accompanied him to Kabul, attired as a brave soldier. The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan received them civilly, but soon seized the opportunity to make his guests his prisoners. The perfidious Dost Mohammed Khan would have killed the Mir without loss of time, but the more talented prisoner knew well that gold was the only thing which would melt the strong feelings of the Afghan, and especially of their treacherous host. He offered him, therefore, one lakh of rupees if immediately liberated, and permitted to go and collect from his own country, and in the meantime to make the Shias of Kabul security for the payment. The Amir, being always notoriously in exigence, contracted the orders for his execution, so that he might secure for himself possession of the money. While the arrangements were going on for obtaining the security of the Gholam Khanah, with regard to the payment of the offered sum, the captive Mir contrived his escape from the prison.

When this became known to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, there was no restraint to his wrath and disappointment. He had still, however, the brave wife of the fugitive in his custody, whom he summoned into his presence and rebuked very severely. The Hazarah fair, turning towards the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, in the court, exclaimed in a heroic tone of voice—"Oh, son of Sarfraz Khan, dost thou not feel ashamed to match thyself against a female?" It is said, that on hearing this, the Amir and all his Afghan courtiers hung down their heads and were abashed. They applauded the spirit of the lady, and said to the Amir that they will not permit him to offer her any violence: and the Amir having recovered his senses, agreed to place her in the custody of the Shias, thinking that she will be treated by them better than by her former Afghan guard, and she was conducted to the Persian or Shia quarter—Chandaul. After some days she made her escape from the gaol, and dressing herself like a man, well armed and mounted, set off towards the high and bleak hills of the Hazarahs. The Amir was soon informed of her flight, and dispatched immediately a party of

horsemen to seize her: she was overtaken, but succeeded in keeping off her pursuers by firing her gun and pistols towards them. The skirmish continued while she was sometimes halting, and at other times ascending the valley, till at last she reached the boundary of her own country, and the party sent by the Amir was now obliged to go back to Kabul, ashamed of not being able to secure a female; while the enterprising lady joined her husband with deep sensations of satisfaction. The Hazarah chief, however, never showed any ill will towards the Amir of Kabul, never interfered with his extortions, and the abuse which he made of his power in other districts of the Hazarahs. He was, moreover, very prudent in paying his tribute,—but at the same time engaged in erecting a very strong fort, and storing it with provisions and ammunition, with the view to have safe refuge in it when necessary.

Upon the other hand, the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan had not lost sight of the increasing power of his fugitive visitor, Mir Yazdan Bakhsh, the Hazarah chief. He was watching his progress with bitterness of mind, and searching for a favourable opportunity to check and destroy it. He now appointed Haji

Khan Kakar governor of Bamian. By this he convinced him of his lasting gratitude in bestowing a reward on him for the services he had rendered in informing him of the intention of Sherdil Khan to deprive him of sight; and at the same time he thus placed an Afghan, one of a different creed, to watch the conduct of his neighbour, the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh. This person, by his cunning manners, had cultivated a friendly sentiment and intimate connexion with the Shias of Kabul; and had secured their confidence by pledging himself to support their cause against the Amir if circumstances required it. In consequence of this they always wrote to Mir Yazdan Bakhsh, advising him to rely on the word and counsels of Haji Khan, who, on the other hand, gained the sincere friendship and intimacy of the Hazarah Mir, by binding himself to destroy all the ill intentions of the Amir towards him; and he even said that he would stand by his side if he was to rebel from necessity. After some time, the agent of Haji Khan, at Bamian, entered into some agreements with the Tartar chief of Saighan, the enemy of Mir Yazdan Bakhsh. This frightened the Mir, who thought that this proceeding was a league made

for his destruction, and that not without advice from Kabul. He therefore turned out all the Afghan soldiers from all forts where he had himself formerly placed them. He subdued and took possession of all the castles of the petty Hazarah chiefs dependant on the Afghans, and he became the ruling master of the Bamian valley. This alarmed the Amir of Kabul; and Haji Khan, whose interests were connected with the Bamian territory, showed him the necessity of reducing the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh, and he also took upon himself to settle the matter. He showed himself liberal on every occasion to the Hazarahs, the tribe of the Mir; and through the Qizalbashes of Kabul he convinced the Hazarah Mir that his agent at Bamian had acted contrary to his orders; and in order to show the sincerity of his false friendship, he dismissed Rahimdad Khan, and appointed a new governor. He also sent the "Qoran" with oaths that the past is forgotten, and that the future will daily increase their mutual friendship and confidence. He proceeded with the Amir Mohammed Khan, the brother of the Amir of Kabul, towards Hazarahjat; but Mir Yazdan Bakhsh did not join their camp, but in-

stead of that he went on a pilgrimage to Band Barbar.

After the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh had discharged his religious duties, he bent his attention to arrange his political affairs. He accordingly came with a large force to subdue Mohammed Ali Beg, the Tajak chief of Saighan, but the latter shut himself up in a fort, and showed no inclination to fight. Another year rolled on, but neither the Amir of Kabul nor Haji Khan were careless about the means of weakening the Hazarah Mir, whom they could not entrap during the last season. In 1832, Haji Khan again volunteered to collect the revenues of the Hazarahjat, and to establish the authority of the Amir in Bamian on a firmer footing. Dost Mohammed Khan allowed him two years to effect this purpose, reinforced him with two thousand troops, and gave him an elephant in present; and Haji Khan farmed the whole country of the Hazarahs for forty thousand rupees, from the Kabul government. He then proceeded thither, and through the medium of Khan Shirin Khan, the Hazarah Mir made known that he agreed to co-operate with the governor, whose aim was to ensnare the Mir by professions of cordiality, and of good understand-

ing with him, and with the people of his creed. In the mean time, a religious conflict took place between the Shias and the Achakzai Afghans of Kabul, and Haji Khan cunningly took the side of the Shias. In so doing he had two objects in view; firstly, to convince the Shias of his attachment to them, and by this also to entrap the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh; and, secondly, if the Javan Shers or Shias should gain the ascendancy in this warfare, the subversion of the power of Dost Mohammed Khan will take place of course; and this was his principal desire. However, these affairs ended at last in a peaceable manner: but this duplicity of the Khan, as well as his correspondence with the Uzbeks, the Panjab, and the Biloch chiefs, did not escape the penetration of the able Amir, who naturally grew suspicious of the Khan. Sometimes, therefore, he thought to deprive him of the power he held, at other times he determined to put him to the sword; but while he continued in this state of irresolution, Haji Khan became acquainted with the alarming fact that he now held no safe position. The Mir Yazdan Bakhsh in the mean time paid him all the revenues, and waited upon him, and this meeting seemed likely to give

perfect satisfaction on both sides; for it induced all the other chiefs in the Hazarahjat to send in their revenues that were due to the Khan, who thus collected sooner and more than his predecessor, the brother of the Amir.

Haji Khan now set out for an expedition towards Saighan; and, finding himself well supported and able to execute his long nourished desire, he summoned Mir Yazdan Bakhsh and his relations in the morning to come to his tent; and as soon as the brother of the Khan, with a strong body of armed men, came in, Haji Khan took an angry tone of voice and accused Mir Yazdan Bakhsh of intriguing against him: and forgetting all the often-repeated oaths of friendship, he seized the Mir with all his relatives. The merciless Afghans began to plunder the Hazarahs, who, notwithstanding the inclemency of the cold, were even deprived of their clothes. The faithless Haji Khan allowed only the Mir Yazdan to be left in his usual attire, and even his relations were obliged to give up their robes. It was a heart-rending sight to see the poor Hazarahs, barefooted and without clothes, pursued in all directions by the Afghans, who were now desirous to inflict on them

wounds and every act of tyranny, because they were Shias. Mir Yazdan Bakhsh was pinioned with his adherents, and their feet bound with fetters; and the locks were fastened with melted lead, to prevent them from being opened by any one, and the chief of Saighan advised Haji Khan to execute his captive. The perfidious Khan accordingly ordered the "Pesh-khid-mat" to put an end to the life of the chief who only a few days before held sway over the whole country, and commanded a large force. The Qizalbashes of Kabul, now with Haji Khan, made a clamorous remonstrance against his dishonesty and treachery towards the Hazarah Mir; but this availed nothing, and the unfortunate Yazdan Bakhsh was strangled to death. It is said that he met his fate with extraordinary composure of mind, and that no sign of fear or sadness was found in his appearance. Haji Khan said to the Qizalbashes that he was obliged and compelled by Dost Mohammed Khan to put the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh to this end. Such, however, was the termination of the life of the Hazarah chief, and thus was the Amir of Kabul relieved from the fear of the only remaining antagonist left in his kingdom.

It must here be stated that the elevation of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan to power was procured merely by the adherence and assistance of the Persians. The grand point of the policy of Nadir Shah was to colonize the distant regions he subdued from his own extensive country of Persia. On his death Ahmad Shah Durrani, who first held and strengthened the sceptre of the realm of Afghanistan, wisely took these foreigners under his protection, and trusted them with his personal safety and with the charge of the royal family; and they were surnamed Gholam Khanah, or the household slaves. He treated them with every consideration, and by a course of unceasing cordiality he attached them to himself, and thus showed his Afghans that he had the warrior Qizalbashes to put them down if they ever stirred against him. Dost Mohammed followed the same policy; and the Qizalbashes, strangers in land, in customs, in habits, and in faith, thought it prudent to attach themselves to him when he was nothing, and was looked on with jealousy by his most powerful and rival brothers. They supported his cause in every extremity, and he was at last so successful as to become the superior of all in Af-

ghanistan. Through their arms he reduced all the old and influential men of his own tribe and blood, and then patronized young adventurers of obscure origin in order to diminish the strength of those to whom he owed gratitude at least for his prosperity. These Qizalbashes were twelve thousand families in number in former days, all men of arms, and not of trade; but now they are reduced to plough the land and to sell vegetables, and are craftily managed and placed by the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan against each other. Their clans are different, and they bear various names, as Javan Shers, Afshars,* Rikas, Kurds, Bakhtyaris; and, in fact, they thus show their origin and descent from every tribe of Persia.

The chiefs in Afghanistan do not value education as the first quality, for they must only know how to ride, fight, cheat, and lie; and whoever excels in these acquirements gains the renown of the time. Amongst the sons of Sarfraz Khan, the brothers of the Amir Dost Mohammed, few knew the letters of the alphabet. Their early life was spent in poverty, danger, treachery, and bloodshed; but when they came to power, the constant sight of the orders

* The tribe of the great Nadir Shah.

submitted by the Mirzas (Secretaries) for their signature at last enabled them to read plain writing. Mehardil Khan, one of the Qandhar chiefs, qualified himself more than the others. He composed poetry, and made himself distinguished by his literary taste in Persia; yet there are some of his brother chiefs who can neither write nor read. The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan learnt the "Qoran" only at the meridian of his glory, and Nayab Amir Mohammed Akhundzadah was his tutor. However, his local knowledge, and the information he possesses in ancient and modern history, in proverbs, and in adventures, as well as in the administration of various distant kingdoms, will not fail to show him as being well stored with extraordinary talents and science. He speaks Persian, Pashto, Turkish, Panjabi, and the Kashmir languages.

Haji Khan Kakar, the perfidious murderer of Mir Yazdan Bakhsh, came from Bamian on a visit to Kabul; and on his arrival in the city he went straight to pay his respects to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. He, with polite attention, took the Khan, his visitor, into the palace, and introduced him to his favourite wife, the mother of Mohammed

Akbar Khan, with a cheerful voice; and to show him a false respect, he said to her that her father had arrived, whom she was so long desirous to see. The crafty Haji Khan knew instantly that this flattering title from the Amir was not destitute of some treachery. He waited the result, therefore, with anxiety, and the next day he was informed by the Amir that his wife, who looks upon him (the Khan) as her father, has begged of him a favour; and that he will not disapprove of her appointing Haidar Khan to the Government of Bamian, and the Amir will equally provide the Khan with a larger yearly sum in cash. This awoke Haji Khan from mental slumber, and he thought that his fortune was now commencing to decline; wherefore, after some days, he waited upon the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, and showed symptoms of being deeply offended and discontented with these measures. The Amir hereupon angrily accused him of the atrocious murder of the Mir Yazdan Bakhsh, on which the Khan inquired whether it was not perpetrated by his own orders:—"No," replied Dost Mohammed Khan; "it was never my wish that you should take a false oath, and kill the man afterwards. I repeatedly

wrote to you to be kind to him, and induce him to come to Kabul, and to give him many dresses of honour. I would have been friendly to him, and permitted him to go back to his own country." Haji Khan then continued his remonstrance by saying, that it is most surprising that the Amir should accuse him of false swearing, and asked him how he had himself entrapped, and then had cut off the heads of the Kohistan chiefs. The Amir replied, by his own expertness, because he always sent a piece of wood wrapped up instead of the Holy Qoran. While this altercation was going on, the Amir did not tell him to disband his dependants, as he thought it would create an illiberal idea of his own feeling towards the soldiers; while Haji Khan, having no means to maintain them, would disband them himself. The Khan, however, retained them still, for he entertained for some time the hopes of having back Bamian; but he at length was compelled to discharge his followers.

There are no courts of justice in Kabul, and the matters of consequence are therefore all decided by the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan himself: hence a great criminal, or murderer, has a general hope of

being released unpunished, if money, and sometimes influence, may interfere with his decision. The petty offences, and religious business, are entrusted to the care of the Mulla, or head of the Shara, or the Mahomedan law. He has appointed a kotval, or constable, who keeps watch at night, and has the privilege to seize the persons who may be found committing adultery, drinking wine, gambling or stealing. He puts such persons into prison, or "Bandikhanah," without limiting the time, and they can be released only through the medium of some man of rank, or by the discharge and payment of a certain sum. The criminal is neither fed nor clothed in the winter by the government, wherefore his subsistence depends upon begging alone. Even in these two departments of the "Mulla" and "kotval," if there is even the slightest chance of squeezing money from any sort of offender, he will not escape the tortures, long imprisonment, and even threats of the Amir personally. A most singular case happened a little before the arrival of the English mission in Kabul. The wife of Khairuddin, the son of Mulla Badruddin, the great merchant of Kabul, whom the Amir respected and called by the appellation of

father, bore only a suspected character, and the Amir got information of her being out of doors at a late hour of the night. He was aware that her seizure would be productive of a very large sum, and he dispatched a person of trust to apprehend her when she returns from her visit, and to conduct her into his presence; and this was accordingly done. The Amir kept her very close and concealed, and the relations felt disgrace as well as anxiety from her prolonged absence; and knowing her habits, were still more vexed to think that she was in custody. However, the Amir, for his own sake, allowed her to communicate her apprehension to her husband, but said, as she was a lady of a rich family, she was to pay him ten thousand rupees before she would obtain her liberation. Mulla Badruddin, although he was every day in court with the Amir, yet feeling ashamed to speak on such a disgraceful subject as his daughter's imprisonment, never uttered a word to Dost Mohammed Khan. He, on the other hand, being aware that the delicacy of the case will seal the old rich merchant's mouth, persisted not to diminish ought of the demanded sum. The absence of the lady from home was now the talk of all the neighbours;

and to put an end to this, the relatives were compelled to send her the amount secretly into the prison. She gave it all to the Amir, who, after depriving her of the jewels and shawls with which she was covered, dismissed her from custody. A similar case in some respects followed this deed of extortion.

There was a young man of moderate income, related to Sufi Naqshbandi, who is the only person that repairs watches and other European articles of the kind in Kabul. He fell in love with a handsome girl of a rich Khatri, whose heart was also won. She left the house of her parents, who were grieved at her choice, and unwilling to see their child married to a person of a different religion, and of strange customs; while he, on the other hand, bribed the Amir, and requested his interference. The girl was accordingly caught, and ordered to be sent to the palace. She remained there for a considerable time in charge of Dost Mohammed Khan; and the parents, considering that she was not worthy to mingle with them any more after living in the "Haram serai" of the ruler, where she must have drunk and eaten with Musalmans, showed no anxiety to

have her restored to them. On this the Amir communicated his will to her paramour, that if he will give him a certain sum of money, he may have the possession of the fair object of his desire. The money was accordingly paid; and the young damsel, after thus causing the coffers of the Amir to be filled by the plaintiff and by the defendant, was sent out of the palace. Such is a sample of the mode in which the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan sometimes distributes justice.

When Haji Khan Kakar was governor of Bamian, he had made a close alliance with the Tartar chiefs of Turkistan. He went among them and had conference with several of them, and in particular he paid a friendly visit to Mohammed Morad Beg, Mir of Qunduz, and on his coming to Kabul, the Uzbek envoys accompanied him. The Amir did not wish to recognise their mission to him, as he thought it was framed by the advice of Haji Khan, for his own purposes; yet at the same time he received them in his court, and was civil to them until he had secured to himself the presents brought for him. After they left his presence, he neither gave

them a residence nor appointed any person to entertain them; and they thus were left to the feeding and maintenance of Mulla Badruddin, and of Haji Khan himself, whose repeated applications to show them civility made no effect on the Amir.

CHAPTER IX.

The Wives of the Amir—Their jealousies—Cruel treatment of one of them by the Amir—An anecdote—A Kashmirian wife—Her escape from the Amir—Bitter enmity entertained towards the Amir by Sultan Mohammed Khan—Wives, Sons, and Daughters of the Amir—His policy of depressing his brothers and raising his sons to power—Expedition against the Sikhs—Mirza Abdul Sami Khan arrives at the camp—Victory of the Afghans—Honours bestowed on Akbar Khan—How to estimate the sons of the Amir—State of the Amir's dominions—Revenues—Encouragement of Commerce—Character of the Amir—His military force.

It should not be omitted to mention that while the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan was occupied by day in endeavouring to increase his power and territory, he was not less active at night in planning the augmentation of the number of his wives, that he might complete the cabinet of his pleasures. In some instances, however, his matrimonial connexions were merely political expedients, and not for any domestic comforts. The number of his married wives is not under fourteen, besides the numerous retinue of slave girls. At present the mother of Mohammed Akbar

is his favourite, and takes the freedom to give him her opinion on important occasions. She is descended from a high family, but is very jealous of the other wives of the Amir. Every one of them has a separate allowance, a slave girl, and a slave boy, and they occupy different rooms in the Palace or Haram Sarai, which is encircled by a high wall. Only one door is there for communication, where a few men, generally of old age, "Qabchis," are stationed. When the slave boy is absent, the slave girl brings orders from her mistress to the "Qabchi" for a purchase, or for any other purpose from the inside. If I remember the name well, one of the wives of the Amir who is named Bibi Gauhar, excited the great jealousy and animosity of the mother of Akbar Khan, who always sought for an excuse to create the suspicions and the wrath of the Amir against the rival lady. One evening there was a demand of firewood in the establishment of Bibi Gauhar, and her slave boy brought a quantity of it piled on the back of the seller. His eyes were, on entering the palace door, blindfolded, and his face wrapped in a cloth while he was conducted by the boy. After unloading the burthen from his back, he was in the same

manner brought back and let out of the Haram Sarai. Hereupon the penetrating and jealous mother of Akbar Khan thought this the best opportunity to excite some abusive, but unjust suspicion of her character in the heart of the lord. The Amir was quietly asked in through Mohammed Akbar Khan, and the mother of the latter, taking him aside, stated that it was a disgraceful thing that her "Ambagh," rival wife of the Amir, was visited by her paramour, who came in under the disguise of a wood-seller; and she then fabricated sufficient stories to make the Amir prepared to meet her object, for he appeared incensed, and considered that it was not a fabrication; and the poor lady, who a little before was the charming idol of the Amir, was sent for and ordered to be punished for her misconduct. Her assertions of truth were not listened to, and he told Mohammed Akbar Khan to wrap her all in a blanket, and throwing her on the ground to strike her with sticks. The son was now perfectly aware of the jealousy of his own mother against her, and did not fail to inflict many most severe and cruel blows upon her. She was not released until she fainted, and appeared quite motionless in the bloody blanket. After some

time when she recovered, the Amir found that he had been deceived by his wife, the mother of Akbar, and he apologized to the sufferer for his sad mistake, and punished the fair inventor of the story (Akbar's mother), only by not going to her apartments for a few days. Bibi Gauhar was the widow of Mahmud Shah, afterwards of Mohammed Azim Khan, and is now one of the Amir's wives.

At breakfast one day the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan asked one of his guests to eat an egg, to which he replied that he had already eaten a considerable number of slices of roast mutton, and feared an egg might cause an attack of indigestion. This made the Amir burst into laughter, and he said that the Amir Bangashi's wife bore a more masculine taste and appetite for eggs than his noble guest, who appears to yield in this affair to a female. In an amusing tone of voice Dost Mohammed Khan entertained the circle of his courtiers with the following anecdote:—When I went to the Bangash country to collect the revenues of that district, political circumstances induced me to marry the daughter of the chief, afterwards known as the mother of Mohammed Afzal Khan. According to the custom of the Afghans,

the parents of the lady place several baskets of fruits and of sweetmeats, and one or two of boiled eggs, coloured variously, in the chambers of the newly-married pair. After the dinner was over the Amir with his bride retired, and while amusing themselves with conversation, he took a fancy for some grapes, and the bride handed him an egg, which he found in fact to have a better taste than any he had ever had before. He added that he saw his bride using her fingers with admirable alacrity in taking off the skin preparatory to swallowing an egg, and that this activity continued till she finished the whole basketful, to his astonishment, and he remarked that there were not less than fifty eggs in the basket!

Before we speak of the other ladies of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan it would not perhaps be uninteresting to the readers to mention a singular instance of fidelity and perseverance in duty of a Kashmirian wife, named Bibi Karmi, in the face of danger and of every temptation. I have already mentioned her being formerly married to Mohammed Rahim Khan Amin-ul-mulk. When this chief was confined by Kam Ran at Qandhar,

his son Prince Jahangir heard much said in commendation of the prisoner's wife, and he endeavoured to get possession of her. His threats and his offers of good fortune were equally received with contempt by the lady, who at length was informed that the prince had sent a party to seize and conduct her to the palace. Without saying a word to her dependants she left the house immediately, and threw herself into an adjacent well, in order to preserve her chastity and to avoid the dishonour of violation by her royal captor. Fortunately the well was dry, and was filled with rubbish, &c.; and although she suffered several bruises, yet she remained alive, and unseen by all, except by one merchant, who was standing at the time on the roof of his house. He had heard the report, and became convinced that the female who had thrown herself into the well must be Bibi Karmi, wife of the Amin-ul-mulk. He was also aware that there was in it no water, and therefore he secretly conveyed to her some meal and water at night. Jahangir could not find anywhere the object of his rash passion, and he plundered the houses of the neighbours when they failed to give him accurate information of her move-

ments. The prisoner chief was forgetful of his own sufferings at the idea of the capture of his fair wife, which was bitterly marring the peace of his heart, for he did not know that she was safe, though suffering a strange kind of safety in the well. After some days the husband was liberated on paying two lakhs of rupees to Kam Ran, and permitted to proceed to Kabul. He was on his way overtaken and joined by his wife Bibi Karmi, after her wonderful escape. The merchant who had fed her in the well for his own good will, and expecting a high reward from Amin-ul-mulk, brought a horse, and mounting the Bibi Karmi on its back, started off from the city, and after a continued march of sixty hours, delivered the lady to the Khan, who felt no bounds to his unexpected joy, and rewarded the man liberally. On the death of Amin-ul-mulk the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan communicated the wish of his marriage to her, which was received with great hatred by the Kashmirian widow. The Amir, stimulated by the reputation of her beauty and wealth, determined to possess her, and ordered his counsellor, Agha Husain, to proceed to her residence, and placing her forcibly in the "jampan" (a kind of

open litter), to escort her to his "haram sarai." The order was accordingly executed, and the qazi, or the priest, was desired to solemnize the ceremony of marriage, while the sad shrieks of the widow were rending to the ears of the hearers. When the party broke up and the Amir retired, he was overpowered by the charms of her beauty. Now as to Bibi Karmi, she was never at rest from the moment she was married without her own consent, and her tears flowed in torrents. All the endeavours of the Amir to make her his friend were fruitless, and she plainly told him that she would rather poison herself than allow him to approach. She stated that in her opinion it would be a most disgraceful and cold affectation to profess to enjoy his society, and to forget all the good and love of her deceased husband; adding, that it is an unbecoming and vain hope of the Amir to expect love from her; but that if he was desirous to possess the property she has, she would be glad to give him all. On this she placed all her jewels before the Amir with her slave girl, who was also admirably well favoured, and left the room. In short, when he had well considered that nothing could gain the favour and attachment of the lady towards him, he kept her

jewels, and she was permitted to leave the palace after an unpleasant stay of a few months. She is now in Kabul, respected and liked by all, and her fidelity has become a proverbial saying among the Afghans.

In the number of his wives the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan has one from the royal family, which case is unprecedented in record or even in rumour, for no one ever was allowed to make a matrimonial connexion with the royal or Sadozai females. On the contrary, it was considered a great honour if any descendant of the Sadozai would marry a female from the Barakzai tribe, namely, that of the Amir, or indeed of any other tribe besides their own. When the decline of that dynasty commenced, she attracted the sight and attention of the Sultan Mohammed Khan, the brother chief of the Amir, at Peshavar, and a correspondence began between them. She prepared to leave Kabul to be married with her intended husband, under whose escort she was proceeding. The Amir had also lost his heart for her beauty, and got hold of her by force and married her immediately. This at once created, and has ever since maintained, a fatal

animosity between the brothers; and the Sultan Mohammed Khan has often been heard to say that nothing would afford him greater pleasure, even at breathing his last, than to drink the blood of the Amir. Such is the nature of the brotherly feeling now existing between them; and the Amir has often and justly mentioned that these three words, commencing with the Persian letter "ze," and pronounced like *z* in English, are the principal and deadly causes of quarrel among men, namely, "zan" (female), "zar" (money), and "zamin" (land).

Descent or Relationship of the Wives of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan.	Sons.	Names.	Daughters.
1. Sister of Mulla Rashid			
2. Daughter of Mulla Sadiq Ali, the Bangash Chief	2	Mohammed Afzal and Azam Khan	
3. Daughter of Baqa Khan, the Parvan Chief	1	Mohammed Akram Khan	
4. Daughter of Khojah Khanji, whom the Amir murdered in Kohistan, as is already mentioned	. .	. .	1
5. Widow of Shah Mahmud, and afterwards of Azim Khan . .	3	Mohammed Aslam, Hassan and Husain Khan.	
6. Granddaughter of Jahangir Khan, Tori Chief	1	Vali Mohammed Khan.	

Descent or Relationship of the Wives of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan.	Sons.	Names.	Daughters.
7. Daughter of Prince Abbas, who caused enmity between the Amir and Sultan Mohammed Khan	3	. .	1
8. Daughter of a wealthy merchant, Nazir Khair-ullah.*	. .	. .	1
9. Sister of Mehtar Mosa, Chief of Zurmat			
10. Daughter of Sadiq Khan Javan Sher, widow of Azim Khan .	1	Sultan Jan, Stepson.	1
11. Sister of the Chief of Kalat and Ghilzai			
12. Bibi Karmi of the Amin-Ul-mulk, who acted as above related			
13. Daughter of Haji Raihmat-ullah-Khan, famous for being the mother of Akbar Khan, and favourite of the Amir . .	5	Mohammed Akbar† Ditto Haidar. Ditto Sherali. Ditto Amin. Ditto Sharif Khans.	1
14. Daughter of the Chief of Morad Khani, married on his restoration to Kabul or returning from India in 1843.			

The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan's best policy

*. He left Kabul for fear of being seized and deprived by the Amir of his riches, and resided at Bokhara. Amir married his daughter to soothe his fear, and thus induce him to return to Kabul, and plunder him. He knows the Amir's craft, and will not come back.

† This son of the Amir is well known to the world for his treacheries, cruelties, and murders.

for the security of his authority is very judicious, though it has made him disliked by his rival relations. In the commencement of his power we find him occupied in bestowing the administration and charge of various districts upon his relations, or in some instances allowing them the enjoyment of their own possessions. Thus Navab Mohammed Zaman held Jalalabad; Mohammed Usam Khan, Bala Bagh; Jabbar Khan, Laghman and the Ghilzai; Shamshuddin Khan, Ghaznin; Haji Khan, Bamian; and so were also the other petty districts shared among them: but when he gained the stability of his position, he deprived every one of them of all authority, placing his own sons in their places. These feared him more than the others, and followed his example in the administration of their respective territories. Now at length the Amir was firmly established, and looked upon as the supreme Lord of Afghanistan. He was of course surrounded by his intriguing and dissatisfied brothers at home, but yet he entertained no fear of their upsetting him. The alarms, however, were daily increasing from the fear of an enemy abroad,—the powerful ruler of the Panjab.

The Sultan Mohammed Khan, brother of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, influenced by the Sikhs, commenced intrigues and designs for taking Kabul. The Amir ordered Mohammed Akbar Khan to proceed to Khaibar, and then he reinforced him by means of his eldest son, Mohammed Afzal Khan. He did not take this step merely as one frightened by rumours, but he had actually received repeated communications from the chiefs of the Khaibars, demanding the dispatch of some troops, and offering him their co-operation against the Sikhs, stating that otherwise they will be obliged to acknowledge the authority of Ranjit Singh. The army of the Amir encamped at the mouth of the Khaibar Pass, towards Peshawar, and every day skirmishes took place between the Afghans and the Sikh force garrisoned at Jam Road. The Amir considered it proper that his sons and the army should have some person of good judgment to regulate their conduct and the plan of the battle or of the negotiations. He was well aware that he had no more trusty servant nor any wiser man than his minister Mirza Abdul Sami Khan, and him he commanded to join his sons. The Mirza arrived in the camp, and observed that a

large number of Mahomedan fanatics had assembled under the standards of Mohammed Akbar and of Afzal Khan, whether stimulated by religious feelings, or moved thereto by their avarice of plunder; but at the same time he was sure of sustaining one or two very strong battles with the Sikhs then present. He determined on attacking the enemy, and reported all the circumstances and prospects to the Amir at Kabul, and he sent fresh reinforcements under the Navabs Jabbar Khan, Usman Khan, and Shamshuddin Khan. The fort of Jam Road was besieged, and the garrison prevented from fetching any water or grass from outside the citadel. They wrote to Sardar Hari Singh at Peshavar, telling him of their distressed and fearful condition, and solicited his immediate succour. The Sikh chief, with an army of about ten thousand men, twenty pieces of artillery, and a great quantity of ammunition and provisions, came to the relief of the garrison at Jam Road. He attacked the Kabul forces, and compelled Mohammed Akbar Khan to quit his ground; while Mohammed Afzal Khan, his brother, with his conspicuous bravery and judgment, managed to penetrate into the left wing of the Sikh troops, on which

Hari Singh retraced his steps. He then, however, assailed the Navab, defeated him, and captured two of the guns. Many Afghans were fleeing back towards Kabul; but Shamshuddin Khan, noted for bravery, happened to reach the place at this crisis, and by a most daring assault regained the lost field. Hari Singh was mortally wounded, and soon after died; and this gave the Afghans the victory. The Sikhs, after losing their leader, entrenched their position round the fort of Jam Road, and the army of the Amir of Kabul was recalled.

It is a general topic of conversation that, had not Mohammed Afzal Khan shown his judicious valour, and Shamshuddin Khan his rash boldness, the victory would never have been gained by the Afghans. However, all the merits and praise due to them were attributed by the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan to Mohammed Akbar Khan, the son of his favourite wife. She gave feasts and illuminated the city in commemoration of the victory gained by her son, and prevailed upon her husband to think and say that every honour and all applause was due to him. Since that period the eldest son of the Amir, Mohammed Afzal Khan, with other heroes of the family,

is very much disheartened. No feeling of pure regard has since existed between the father and these sons; and Akbar Khan continues gaining the favour and strength of the Amir.

It is a matter of unquestionable truth, that Mohammed Akbar Khan, by his most extraordinary and successful intrigues, cruelties, and murders has gained the highest pitch of influence in Afghanistan and renown in England, but Mohammed Afzal Khan is the first of all the sons of Dost Mohammed Khan who possesses a sound judgment and the laudable quality of heroism. On the death of the Amir there will be no doubt a general commotion in Kabul. If Sultan Mohammed Khan, the ex-chief of Peshavar, or any of the present chiefs of Qandhar, be in existence at that period, no doubt he will then exert himself to become the master of the capital, and many chiefs, and even the sons of the Amir, will co-operate with any of these against Mohammed Akbar Khan. On the other hand, none of the sons of the Amir stands so high in the estimation of the population and of the chiefs, and the Barakzai family, as Mohammed Afzal Khan, and all these will join him against Akbar Khan. Mohammed

Azam Khan, also the brother of the former, will not hesitate to intrigue for killing the latter, while Akram Khan, and the other sons of the Amir, will unite with him. Akbar Khan will have no supporters but his own younger brothers, as Haidar Khan, &c. The whole dominion of Kabul, now under the possession of the Amir, will be divided into small principalities, governed by his sons, and independent of each other; and continued warfare, intrigues, assassinations, and plundering of the merchants, will be the predominant features of the government.

It is well known that the Amir Dost Mohammed is not the master of the whole of Afghanistan. He has, of course, seated himself on the throne, or in broad words, in the capital of that dominion—Kabul. The city is divided by the river "Jue Shir," which springs from Sirchashmah, on the road to Bamian; has a population of about sixty-five thousand souls; lat. 34° 30′, long. 69° 6′. The whole province of Kabul, or the authority of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, extends from Hindu Kush-Parwan, lat. 35° 10′, long. 69° 12′ on the north, to Mukar, south of Ghuzni, lat. 32° 52′, long. 67° 41′,

and little higher from Bamian in the west, lat. 34° 50′, long. 67° 48′, to the Khaibar pass in the east, lat. 33° 58′, long. 71′ 30′,* making a length of two hundred miles from east to west, and the breadth of about one hundred and seventy miles from north to south. All the distances above detailed are often traversed by the Amir's cavalry from three to five days. The principal towns and marts of the country are Jalalabad, Ghazni, and Charkar, with some other petty places of renown, as Istalif, Shakardrah, &c. &c.

On the revenues of the province of Kabul a great many assertions are in existence, varying from each other very considerably. My information on this point is derived from the records of the chief collectors of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, as Mirza Sayad Husain, Divan Mitha upon one side, and Divans Birbal and Daya Ram on the other. These parties, however, differ in the total sum, but the connexion of Sayad Husain with the minister of the Amir, is the manifest reason of his pocketing large sums undetected from the revenues, while the latter Divans proved the truth on their own side, by putting

* Thornton's 'Gazetteer of the Countries adjacent to India.'

down the additional sums only on the paper which were realized for the government, and paid in accordingly. By the Sayad's account, the annual sum of money derived from the land, custom-house, extortion, and other unjust sources (Bidat), amounts to 2,431,271 rupees, while Divan Birdal collected 2,509,238 lakhs. It would be better and perhaps the shortest way to put down here the list of the collections of the latter, and I shall mention the amount of the revenue under its proper heading or name by which it is raised, namely, "Asal," or just, and "Bidat," or unjust. The accounts of Divan Birbal make an additional sum of 77,967 rupees in favour of the government.

Names of the ——, or of the Places the Revenue is collected from.	"Asal," or just Amount of the Revenue.	"Bidat," or unjust Amount of the Revenue.	Total Sum in Kabul Rupees.
Duties from Custom House	207,580	92,340	299,920
Vajah Shahganj, Arghande, &c. &c. .	109,054 and 2 abbasi	11,920 and 1 sannar	120,975
Bilok-i-Kohdaman, Char Yakar, and Lahogard	389,914 and 3 shahis	23,635 and 1 shahis	413,549 and 1 abbasi
Istalif	24,834 and 1 abbasi	1,525 and 6 shahis	26,360
Khalsah, Government Land	159,179	..	159,179
Rezah Kohistan and Bulaghain . . .	18,831	2,805	21,636

Names of the ——, or of the Places the Revenue is collected from.	"Asal," or just Amount of the Revenue.	"Bidat," or unjust Amount of the Revenue.*	Total Sum in Kabul Rupees.
Ghorband	23,480	2,732	26,212
Tajakyah Maidan	21,825	921 and 5 shahis	22,746
Charkh	23,306	1,000	24,306
Ghilzai	222,595 and 1 senar	7,631 and 1 shahi	230,226 and 3 shahis
Behsud and Bamian	69,964	..	69,964
Ghaznin	397,971 and 7 shahis	37,451 and 3 shahis	435,423
Taefah Kharauti, Shinvari, &c. . .	18,321	740	19,061
Zurmat, Gardez, and Kharvar . . .	64,240 and 2 abbasi	950	65,190 and 8 shahis
Hazarah Turkam, and Parsa . . .	6,599	..	6,599
Khurm and Khost	95,000	..	95,000
Jalalabad and Lamghan-i-Tajakyah .	435,588	29,940	465,528
"Darkat-i-Mut-faraqah Havai," . .	5,870	3,850 and 6 shahis	9,720 and 6 shahis
Total	2,292,380	216,902	..
Grand Total . . .	..	..	2,509,238

The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan has acquired great celebrity for the encouragement of commerce in comparison with the conduct of his brothers, the chiefs of Qandhar and Peshavar; and in this he has acted wisely, both for his own benefit and for that of

the merchants. The roads under his government are safer than they were in former days; and there are no further demands on the merchandise made by the petty officers of the customs, as there were under the Sadozai dynasty. But I have heard from Mulla Rahim Shah, Gholam Qadir, and Gopaldas Shikarpuri, merchants of first rank, that the consumption of goods, and the circulation of money, was upon a much larger scale under the disturbed state of the late kings' governments only in Kabul than it is now under the Barakzai chiefs, including Qandhar and Peshavar, as well as Hirat.* The chief of Kabul has established some new duties on the exports, the imports, and the transit of goods in Kabul, under various names, commonly called "Bidat," which has already been stated under the head of revenues. The Amir has encouraged commerce indeed, but yet he has often forcibly extorted large sums of money from the merchants, wherewith to maintain his troops for sake of the extension and stability of his government. Whenever traders with shawls from Kashmir, or horses from Bokhara, pass on their way through Kabul, the Amir avails himself of the first descrip-

* Independent of the Barakzais.

tion of the articles, and of the animals, and giving no value to all the cries of the owner, he pays any sum he likes; which, of course, is much less than the original price. The merchants bring a great quantity of gold in Russian ducats, and the Bokhara tilas for Amrat Sar and India; but a good deal more from the former place. They bring these openly in the smallest quantity only, for fear of being seized by the Amir; and being thus forced they practise smuggling. At one time, while the British mission was in Kabul, a Lohani merchant was seized, if I remember well, with twenty thousand ducats; and on application made on his behalf several times by the late Sir Alexander Burnes, the Amir reluctantly restored some portion of it to the merchant.

Amount of duties levied at the different offices of customs in the province of Kabul, given to me by Mirza Sami, the minister of the Amir:—

Names of Places.	Amount in Kabul Rupees.
Kabul	212,000
Ghazni	80,000
Bamian	55,000
Kafshan	4,500
Charkar	10,000
Istalif	6,000
Sarae Khojah	4,000
Arghande	16,000

Names of Places.	Amount in Kabul Rupees.
Jalalabad	7,000
Basaval or Hazarah nau . .	2,500
Gandumak	2,500
Lahogard	6,000
Sardari	6,000
Goshi Qandhar	2,000
From the city gates called "Chiraghi" (lamp)	2,000
Total . .	415,500

It must be understood that the above mentioned sum is included in the revenue of the government, and the total amount of 2,509,238 rupees is nearly equal in Company's rupees to 2,262,943, or about 226,294*l.* sterling. All the government and mercantile accounts are received and paid in Kham rupees, equal to ten shahis each. This is not a current coin, but is used in the accounts.

In the person, in the manners, and in the public proceedings of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, there is manifest the existence of every thing imaginable most suitable to support his own view. He is calm, prudent, and wise in cabinet, and an able commander in the field. In treachery, cruelty, murder, and falsehood, he is equally notorious. He is not at all a popular ruler, but he is the first man

in Afghanistan who knows how to keep his authority undisturbed, and to deal effectually with the vagabond Afghans. He is certainly very much liked in regard to one thing, namely this: any man seeking for justice may stop him on the road by holding his hand and garment, once his beard, may abuse him for not relieving his grievances; and the Amir will continue to listen to him without disturbance or anger. Upon several occasions people in companies come near to the palace, and by the shouts of "Dad," justice, deafen the ears of the hearers; but seldom do they receive what they want. On the whole, whatever odium may be attached to the Amir of Kabul, it is an unquestionable fact that he is the only person fit to rule Kabul. Dost Mohammed Khan is of the Sunni religion, being the son of an Afghan; but as his mother is a Shia, he is therefore suspected to be of her creed, though he does not confess it openly. He has indulged in all sorts of dissipation, and experienced all kinds of hardships. When he gained power, he prohibited the sale and the use of wine, and prevented dancing girls from remaining in his kingdom, while the dance performed by boys was considered lawful! One day he was informed that

some women were drinking and dancing privately in the house of Husain, the servant of Nayab Abdul Samad, on which the Amir sent people to seize them. The punishment inflicted upon them for drinking wine against the Mohammedan law and his own notification was the infliction of deformity instead of their beauty, in order to prevent them from appearing again in drinking parties. Their heads were shaved, and the beard of the host was burnt by the flame of a candle! The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan always gets up before it is dawn, takes a bath, makes his prayers, and reads a portion of the "Qoran" every morning. After that Mahmud Akhund Zadah gives him some lessons in history as well as poetry. He receives afterwards the state people privately in the dressing-room of the bath, and then comes out to hold his court. He sits there generally till 1 P.M. Now he had his breakfast, or I may say his dinner, as it is just the same as he receives after sunset. When he has finished his breakfast or mid-day meal he sleeps till 4 P.M. He then discharges his prayers, and proceeds usually to ride, sees his stud, and returns to the palace, where he dines with his immediate courtiers and friends.

There is then some talk of his early proceedings and of his future plans; and the wonder, the jealousy, and the ascendancy of foreign powers are discussed. Sometimes chess, and at other times music, were the favourite amusements of the evening. He amused himself generally in this manner till one hour past midnight. All the chiefs are then dismissed, and on retiring the Amir resides in the apartments of his wives. They live in separate parts, and the Amir pays a visit to one lady one night, and to another wife the next night, and no one is visited two nights successively except the mother of Mohammed Akbar Khan.

The military strength of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan does undoubtedly exceed and excel that of any other of the chiefs of Afghanistan; and if I am rightly informed, the Sadozai kings never had such a large park of well-mounted guns as the Amir has. Whatever his occupations were during the day or night, his sole aim was bent towards the improvement and increase of his military power. He had fifty pieces of cannon, some of them well cast, besides those which were captured from the Sikhs when Sardar Hari Singh fell in the battle of Jam Road;

he has also about two hundred of "Shahnaks," good ones of their kind; these being light and small are placed on the backs of camels, and used by the driver. His cavalry amounted to twelve thousand in number, and is composed of two different brigades, the one called "Khud Aspah," riders of their own horses, and the other, "Amlah Sarkari," mounting the government horses. These are placed under the petty "Khavanins," in various numbers, from two to two hundred horses, and then attached to, and commanded by, some one of his own sons. Mohammed Akbar Khan usually leads two thousand, Mohammed Afzal Khan six hundred, Gholam Haidar Khan one thousand, and so on, the other sons and the Navabs, and the rest of the relations of the Amir, have few followers. He has also more than two thousand of "Jazayarchis," or infantry, bearing a large musket, like a wall piece of ordnance, which they use with a rest. This arm has gained great improvement under Mohammed Akbar, and his best and most confidential Ghilzai are armed with them, and he superintends the manufacture of them in person. The infantry of the Amir, organized by Nayab Abdul Samad, Mr. Campbell, and Dr. Harlan,

cannot be compared to the cavalry of that chief, but as they are generally the men of the mountains, they are by the position of their country and mutual warfare well adapted to fight under the shelter of bushes, walls, and hollow places, where the uniform movements of our foot regiments will not permit them to exercise their discipline as the Afghans can. Their muskets are also better for throwing balls to a long distance than those of England. This portion of the Amir's force is limited to about fifteen hundred men.

The pay of the troops is not properly distributed, for neither the cavalry soldiers nor commanders, "Khavanins," receive an equal sum; the increase of pay and rank both depend entirely upon the influence and patronage of their friends. They are paid yearly in cash, grain, grass, sheep, blankets, and butter, which, after obtaining an order from the paymaster, they get from the local collectors and the headmen of the villages in the country. The general pay of a horseman is 12 tomans, or 120 Kabul Kham rupees, that is about 10*l.* a-year, which feeds and clothes him with his family, as well as his charger—such is the

wonderful cheapness of provisions in that country. The foot soldier has no more than 84 rupees, or 8*l.* a-year, in the same manner, but a greater number of them are engaged for only about 6*l.* per annum.

CHAPTER X.

Connection of the British with Afghanistan—Policy of Russia —Her alliance with Persia—The Afghans lean towards the British Government—Claims on Peshavar—Policy of Lord William Bentinck—Of Lord Auckland—Letter from the Amir to the Governor-General—Reply of the latter—Mission of Sir Alexander Burnes—The Amir demands the restoration of Peshavar—Sir Alexander's Reply—Dissatisfaction of Dost Mohammed Khan—His letter to the King of Persia—His plan of balancing Russia, Persia, and England against each other.

I HAVE now fully related the adventurous commencement of the career of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, and brought him gradually to the zenith of his glory. It is evident that the Afghans never put any circumstances on record, nor do they take the trouble to keep past events fresh in their memory. Whatever they do remember is preserved by the memory only, in the rudest manner. My informants always failed in giving the precise dates, or even the years of the Amir's progress, as noticed

in the preceding pages, and therefore no blame can be justly attached to this narrative for misplacing the events of his career. I shall now begin to describe the circumstances which opened the way for making the British more familiar with Afghanistan, and which also made the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan desirous to correspond with the Indian authorities.

Upon the one hand the English Government always sought for information in an independent state, lying between the confines of the Indian Empire and the Caspian Sea, and its officer felt an anxiety to secure that object. That political foresight was even worked upon so far back as 1808, when the mission of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone was directed and proceeded to that quarter. The valuable "Account of the Kingdom of Kabul," published by that functionary, opened the eyes of the British nation to explore its curiosities, and in a political view the attention of the Government was most earnestly directed to that part of the globe. Hence also some Englishmen of mature sense and much ambition were induced to penetrate into that despotic country, and thought that, by making important and improved additions to the already gained know-

ledge of that extensive tract, and close familiarity with its vast number of inhabitants, they might gain the patronage of their Government and high estimation in their own country. With these deliberate views of advantage, therefore, they set out to carry their objects into effect. First of all Mr. Moorcroft entered Afghanistan, but unfortunately he expired on the other side of the Hindu Kush. Mr. Sterling, Captain Arthur Conolly, and after all the late Sir Alexander Burnes,* walked in the same path as marked out by his predecessors. The more new knowledge we gained of that region the more interest we felt in relation to its importance, both in a political and commercial point of view. For this purpose the navigation of the river Indus was opened, and a favourable alliance made with the Sindhians, the Daud potrahs, and the Sikhs.

Upon the other hand, the Persians and the Afghans having much more inland communication with each other, and dwelling on the frontiers of Russia, nourished a magnified idea of her ambitious policy, of her great power, and of her jealous eyes towards British India, and thus they considered themselves

* When the author of these Memoirs accompanied him.

the fortunate favourites of both these rival nations. The Persians, being wiser and nearer than the Afghans, set the example of acting on this universal feeling, allied herself to Russia, while she continued to profess the holding of intimacy with England, and in this manner thought she obtained her wishes. The Afghans, though not so polished as their neighbours in Persia, were not altogether unaware of the interest which the English took in their extensive country, which commanded the passes or doors leading to India. With this thought the late King Shah Shuja sought asylum in British India, and hoped to be supported by us, and in this he was not disappointed. Also in the same opinion the late celebrated Vazir Fatah Khan sent communications to the Indian Government. The same impression was on the heart of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, but his crafty manœuvring brought all the secret designs of the parties concerned in them to light, and he thought that he possessed the key of Hindustan, which no doubt will be too dearly bought by the English if there should happen the slightest shadow of another bidder.

With these well matured sentiments he desired to

make himself known to the governments of India, Persia, and Russia; and while his brother, the Sultan Mohammed Khan of Peshavar, was alive, and held the Kohat and Hasht-nagar districts of that province under his acknowledged superior, Maharajah Ranjit Singh, the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, whom both always despised and feared, made claims upon Peshavar. There were always warfare and negotiations between him and the Sikhs upon this subject, and the Amir despatched communications and agents to the governments of British India, Persia, and Russia, soliciting the interference of each of these powers to recover the Afghan territory from the ruler of the Panjab, and promised his alliance and services to them (of course against each other) if there should happen the necessity of employing such services in future.

The late Lord William Bentinck, however, did not take a prominent interest in the politics of Afghanistan. In fact there did not seem any necessity during his government to demand attention so seriously in that quarter as it unavoidably happened to require in the time of his successor. The regretted Governor-General nevertheless seemed inclined to

share so far in the politics of that country that he appointed Sayad Karamat Ali,* Mr. Masson, and myself† in Afghanistan to convey to him information of the passing events in that state. This produced an easy way for the Amir to effect his long-nourished objects, and he therefore lost no time in corresponding with the British government. His communications to his Lordship and Sir Claude Wade, the political agent, implored the mediation of their authority to adjust differences between him and his powerful enemy the Maharajah Ranjit Singh. He had strong reasons for fearing that he might be subverted by his foe, who, through the influence of his brother Sultan Mohammed Khan, now with the Sikhs, could injure him (Dost Mohammed) even in Kabul.

In the mean time the Earl of Auckland arrived as the new Governor-General of India, and the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan addressed a congratulating epistle to his Lordship.

* Fellow traveller with the most deeply regretted and distinguished Captain Arthur Conolly.

† I never joined that situation at Qandhar, being appointed in the meantime to settle the disputes between the subjects of Lahore and Bahavalpur during the absence of Major Mackinon.

The Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul to the Governor-General of India.

(After compliments.)

"As I have been long attached to the British Government by the ties of friendship and affection, the late intelligence of your Lordship's arrival, enlightening with your presence the seat of government, and diffusing over Hindustan the brightness of your countenance, has afforded me extreme gratification; and the field of my hopes, which had before been chilled by the cold blast of wintry times, has, by the happy tidings of your Lordship's arrival, become the envy of the garden of Paradise.

"It may be known to your Lordship, that, relying on the principles of benevolence and philanthropy which distinguish the British Government, I look upon myself and country as bound to it by the strongest ties, and the letters I have received from that quarter have all been replete with friendly sentiments and attention,—and to the effect that, in the time of need, the obligations of friendship should be fulfilled. The late transactions in this quarter, the conduct of reckless and misguided Sikhs, and their breach of treaty, are well known to your Lordship. Communicate to me whatever may suggest itself to your wisdom for the settlement of the affairs of this country, that it may serve as a rule for my guidance.

"I hope your Lordship will consider me and my country as your own, and favour me often with the receipt of your

friendly letters. Whatever directions your Lordship may be pleased to issue for the administration of this country, I will act accordingly."

This letter was followed by many others similarly expressive of his anxiety and fear of the Sikhs; and his alarms were truly increased when an army of fifty thousand from Lahaur arrived at Peshavar, intending to revenge the sudden attack of the Afghans upon Jam Road, and the fall of the Sardar Hari Singh in that battle. The Earl of Auckland sent to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan a very kind answer, and at the same time resolved to relieve him from the continued fear of the Sikhs, under the name of holding a commercial alliance with him.

The Earl of Auckland to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan.

22nd August, 1836.

(After compliments.)

"I HAVE had the pleasure to receive your friendly letter, which was transmitted to me through Sir Claude Wade, and I am gratified at the opportunity which it affords so shortly after my assumption of the Indian government, to convey to you the assurances of my unfeigned regard and esteem.

"It is my wish that the Afghans should be a flourishing and united nation; and that, being in peace with all their

neighbours, they should enjoy, by means of a more extended commerce, all the benefits and comforts possessed by other nations, which through such means have attained a high and advanced state of prosperity and wealth.

"My predecessor, aware that nothing was so well calculated to promote this object as the opening of the navigation of the Indus, spared himself no pains in procuring this channel for the flow of industry and enterprise; and it shall be my study to second his philanthropic purpose, and to complete the scheme which he so successfully commenced. I feel assured that you cannot but take a lively interest in the success of this undertaking, so especially conducive as it must be to the prosperity of the people over whom you rule.

"It is probable that I may, ere long, depute some gentlemen to your Court, to discuss with you certain commercial topics, with a view to our mutual advantage.

"I have learned with deep regret that dissensions exist between yourself and the Maharajah Ranjit Singh. My friend, you are aware that it is not the practice of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent states; and indeed it does not immediately occur to me how the interference of my Government could be exercised for your benefit. I shall be happy, however, to learn from you by what means you think that I can be of any assistance; and in the meantime, I have only to hope that you will be able to devise some mode of effecting a reconciliation with the Sikhs; it being not only for your own advantage but for the advantage of all the countries in

the vicinity, that two nations so situated should ever preserve the unimpaired relations of amity and concord.

"Begging that you will accept my renewed assurance of friendship and regard,

"I am, &c. &c.

(Signed) "AUCKLAND."

The receipt of this letter excited a great sensation in Dost Mohammed Khan, and served as a new reason for him to employ his tact in order to second his own objects, by intriguing with Persia and Russia. On the other hand the Governor-General of India made preparations for sending a special mission to his court, and Sir Alexander Burnes was selected to conduct it. The equipage of the mission and the presents for the Amir were nothing in comparison to those of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone when deputed to Shah Shuja-ul-mulk: however, Sir Alexander Burnes, in company with his assistants, Major Leech, Lieut. Wood, and Dr. Lord, of the Bombay Presidency, ascended the Indus, and I was ordered by the Supreme Government to join him on that river.

The mission was well received at Haidarabad,

Khairpur, and Bahavalpur, on its way up the river; and in the latter place Sir Alexander Burnes received a letter from Mr. Masson, the news-writer in Kabul, stating that the Amir has been delighted to hear that he was nominated to confer with him; and he added that whatever the objects of the mission might be, whether commercial or political, they will meet an unreserved welcome from the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. The more near the British mission approached Afghanistan, the more frequently the Amir of Kabul despatched letters to Sir Alexander Burnes, conveying the expression of his delight at the prospect of the interview, and his readiness and desire to attach himself to the British government by any terms the Governor may think proper to propose. On entering the Khaibar Pass the mission was met by a deputation from the Amir, and a salute was fired; and it was honourably conducted and escorted by Shah Ghasi Gul, Mirza Aghajan, and Sadat Khan, the Momand chief, towards Kabul. Dost Mohammed Khan sent another deputation, headed by Nazir Ali Mohammed Khan, who had directions to provide the mission with all the Afghan cookery and the other luxuries of Kabul,

and to wait upon us all the way to Kabul. After some marches it reached Butkhak, and next day Mohammed Akbar Khan, with a large retinue, came to receive and conduct the mission into the city. The procession in entering was very grand, and we were placed on elephants together with him, and thus proceeded onwards between lines made on both sides by the spectators and the respectable citizens, who were requested by the Amir to welcome us. The anxiety and pleasure of Dost Mohammed Khan at the arrival of the English envoy was so great, that he desired his son to conduct us at once to his own presence. He received us most cordially; and near his own palace a beautiful garden, surrounded with the most comfortable apartments, was allotted to us as our place of residence.

On the 21st of September the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan assembled his nobles and received the mission formally. Sir Alexander Burnes submitted his credentials from the Governor-General of India to the Amir, and they were opened by himself, and read aloud by his minister Mirza Abdul Sami Khan; and the Amir seemed really flattered by hearing the contents of them in the presence of those

THE LATE SIR ALEXANDER BURNES KT. C.B.

chiefs who, being older, and having seen the late kings of the Sadozai family, had never dreamt that Dost Mohammed Khan, one of the humblest of the sons of Payandah Khan, could become a person of such consequence as to be respected by the English power.

The credentials were these:—

The Earl of Auckland to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan.

Fort William, 15th May, 1837.

(After compliments.)

"In my letter to your address, dated 2nd August, 1836, I intimated my intention of deputing an officer to confer with you as to the best means of promoting the interests of commerce, and facilitating the intercourse of traders between India and Afghanistan.

"To your enlightened mind it cannot fail to be obvious, that commerce is the basis of all national prosperity, and that it is commerce alone that enables people of one country to exchange its superfluous commodities for those of another; to accumulate wealth, and to enjoy all the comforts and blessings of civilized life.

"The general diffusion of these blessings and comforts among neighbouring nations is the general object of the British Government. It seeks for itself no exclusive benefits, but it ardently desires to secure the establishment of peace and prosperity in all the countries of Asia.

"With this view the British Government prevailed upon

the powers occupying the banks of the river, to open the navigation of the Indus; and to this object, indeed, have all its efforts been invariably directed.

"I now send Sir Alexander Burnes, who will deliver this letter, to confer with you as to the best means of facilitating commercial intercourse between Afghanistan and India. I have no doubt that he will meet with a friendly reception at your Court, and that his personal communication with you will be attended with all the advantages which I anticipate.

"In conclusion, &c.,

(Signed) "AUCKLAND."

For a few days the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan continued to show us every civility, and appearing to act with perfect sincerity and candour; and in his conversation with Sir Alexander Burnes he always showed a moderation in his demands. Sir Alexander Burnes wrote at that time as follows:—"Up to this time my communications with the Amir have been confined to matters of compliment and ceremony, but I shall take an early opportunity of reporting on what transpires at this court, merely observing at present, from what I have seen and heard, that I have good reason to believe Dost Mohammed Khan will set forth no extravagant pretensions, but will

act in such a manner as to enable the British Government to show its interest in his behalf, and at the same time to preserve for us the valued friendship of the Sikh chief."

However, the moderation of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan was of short duration. He forgot that the presence of the British mission in his capital had prevented the Sikh army from revenging the sudden attack of Akbar Khan upon Jam Road, and placed no value on the mediation of the English, which was intended to secure his interests. The tenor of his previous correspondence and conversation was anxiously expressive of his fears of an attack from the Sikhs; but now, changing his views and his mind, he longed for the possession of Peshavar, and he accordingly demanded of Sir Alexander Burnes to write to his government to cause the restoration of that province to him. Sir Alexander Burnes replied to the Amir that Peshavar was never under his authority; and that his brothers, Sultan Mohammed and Pir Mohammed Khan, were the rulers of that part of Afghanistan, and had still "jagirs" in that district, granted to them from the sovereign of the Panjab. He added,

also, that the Maharajah Ranjit Singh was a faithful ally of the English,—was powerful both in arms and in money; and had lost his commander-in-chief, Sardar Hari Singh, in an unprovoked assault of the Afghans upon his handful of forces at Jam Road. The British Government, he said, being desirous to establish peace for the extension of commerce as far as to the markets of Central Asia, and finding by the Amir's letters and words that he was always involved with alarms, resolved to adjust differences between him and the Sikhs by amicable terms; that is to say, the Amir will have no further necessity by extortions to make himself unpopular, to raise troops and to shed blood in fighting with the forces of the Panjab. On the contrary, that he will enjoy the comforts of his authority without fear, and will reign in prosperity. Sir Alexander Burnes continued, that his Government will induce the Maharajah, by friendly advice, to give up Peshavar to its former master, the Sardar Sultan Mohammed Khan, the brother of the Amir; but that the alliance, which so faithfully is maintained by the Maharajah, cannot permit the British Government to use its authority directly on this subject.

In my own presence the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan replied, that this was not the good offices of the English which he had expected; that his hopes were quite different; that he had now a turban of muslin on his head, but that on entering into a friendly relation with the British he had sanguine hopes that he would have a shawl one in lieu of muslin. On the contrary, he finds that the English wish to keep the old material on his head, with the obliging promise that they will not allow any other power to deprive him of it. To this act of amity he attaches not much importance, as he was not afraid that any one will ever wrest it from him. The Amir continued, that the restoration of Peshavar to the Sultan Mohammed Khan will not be a token of the British entertaining good wishes towards himself,—nay, it will hasten the ruin of his government in Kabul. He added, that his brother, Sultan Mohammed, though one of the family, and of one blood with himself, was a more fatal enemy to him even with a small force than the Sikhs with their large army. The Sikhs will lend his brother money, and, under his Mahomedan name, will send forth their intrigues to the very heart of his capital.

Now, also, the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan was informed of the progress of the Persian mission towards Afghanistan, bearing presents and letters in answer to those which he and his brothers the Qandhar chiefs had despatched to the king, and which affair the Amir had kept till this time unspoken.

It must here be said with propriety that when he had communicated his grievances to the British Government, he conveyed the same to the other western powers of Russia and Persia, with the view of gaining his object by playing these three states against each other.

Letter from the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan to His Majesty Mohammed Shah, King of Persia.

(After Respects.)

"SINCE in former days the chiefs of my family were sincerely attached to the exalted and royal house of your Majesty, I, too, deem myself one of the devoted adherents of that royal race; and considering this country as belonging to the kingdom of Persia, I on a former occasion despatched Haji Ibrahim to your Majesty's presence with the object of explaining certain affairs connected with this nation. I crave permission to state, that the cause of my addressing in the present instance is the

following:—Your Majesty is the king of 'Islam,' yet throughout these territories disturbances and misery are caused by that detestable tribe, the Sikhs.

"Although four hundred thousand families of the tribe of Afghans, and the neighbouring tribes, wear the collar of obedience in subjection to this sincere well-wisher, my inability for the employment and arrangement of this multitude limits my forces to twenty thousand excellent horse and ten thousand foot, and fifty guns, which are ready at my capital, Kabul.*

"I have been long engaged in war against one hundred thousand horse and foot of the wicked infidels, who have three hundred guns; but, by the grace and assistance of God, I have not yet been subdued by this faithless enemy, and have been able to preserve the true faith; but how long shall I be able to oppose this detestable tribe, and how long shall I be able to resist their aggressions?† Without doubt an account of the difficulties of my situation has reached your Majesty; and your Majesty must have heard that, notwithstanding the inferiority of my power, I am perpetually engaged in war with the wicked Sikhs, without a moment's cessation. As the noblest of cities, Qandhar and the capital Kabul, and the countries bordering on Khora-

* Exaggeration. For the proper number, see his military power in the preceding pages.

† This is sufficient to show that the Amir feared the aggression of the Sikhs, but never considered that he had a right to seize upon Peshavar, and that it should be given to him, and not to his brother, Sultan Mohammed Khan, is not also known of this.

san, as well as the province of Khorasan, and the country dependant on the above places, form part of the Persian territory, and are within the kingdom of the King of Kings, the misery and welfare of those dominions cannot be separated from the interests of the Persian government. Even if my affairs should fall into disorder, and even if your Majesty should not direct your attention to the condition of these countries, nevertheless I shall persist in contending with the Sikhs as long as I am able; but should it prove that I be unable to resist that diabolical tribe, then I have no choice, and must connect myself with the English, who will thus obtain a complete authority over the whole of Afghanistan; and it remains to be seen hereafter to what places, and what extent the flame of the violence of this nation may be carried.

"I considered it imperative on myself to represent these circumstances to the King of Islam. As for the rest, your Majesty will act as seems expedient to your royal understanding. All other affairs will be narrated by Mohammed Husain Khan, who is a trusty person attached to your well-wisher."

This letter will clearly show that the Amir, without having waited the answer of his former communication, sent through Haji Ibrahim, despatched Mohammed Husain Khan with another letter in the mean time into Persia; and from this proceeding the reader will perceive that the Amir Dost Mohammed

Khan was not desirous to form any connexion with the British government, unless the Shah of Persia should relinquish his cause. He had also sent a letter to the Emperor of Russia by Husain Ali, stating that since Mahomed Shah, the centre of the faith, had closely connected himself with his Imperial power, desiring the advantage of such alliance, that he also being a Mahomedan, was desirous to follow his example, and to attach himself to his Majesty. In that letter the Amir gave an exaggerated account of his own military power and of his successful opposition to the Sikh army, whom he described as commanded by English and French officers. He added that if he was not assisted by the Emperor, the Sikhs, who are in alliance with the English government, will at last overpower him, and that their influence in Afghanistan will be a foundation for that of the British, who, under a commercial name, will become the superiors of this country, and will annihilate the trade which is now so briskly conducted between Moscow, Bokhara, and Kabul.

He then added, "that Husain Ali will fully explain to your Imperial Majesty the feelings of my respect and attachment to your august government, and the

advantages which are likely to result to us all, Russia, Persia, and Afghanistan, from being heartily united, and considered to be but one body." This letter was recently shown to me by the son-in-law of Mirza Sami Khan, with the one which is already published in the Afghanistan correspondence.

The chiefs of Qandhar, the brothers of the Amir of Kabul, had also deputed Taj Mohammed Khan to his Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador in Persia, and his credentials were expressive of similar sentiments of concord and attachment to the Russian government as the letter of Dost Mohammed Khan, alluded to and given above. It is plain enough to observe that the Amir was raised to the supremacy which he enjoyed, by his bloody and treacherous but successful intrigues, and by the adherence to him of the Persian sect in Kabul. He was now, therefore, persuaded by his confidential counsellors, Mirza Sami Khan, Agha Husain, Mahmud Khan Bayat, and Haji Mirza Khan of Nanchi, not to come to a definite alternative in his negotiations with Sir Alexander Burnes, but to wait the arrival of the answers from the Russian and Persian governments.

CHAPTER XI.

A Persian Envoy arrives at Qandhar—The Chiefs of that place make a treaty with him—Letter from the Shah of Persia to the Amir—Instructions of the Persian Envoy—Mr. Ellis's despatch to Lord Palmerston—Sir John Macneil at the Persian Court—The Shah marches against Hirat—Despatches of Sir John Macneil—Russian intrigues—Various letters to the Chiefs of Qandhar—Their treaty with the Shah, under the guarantee of Russia—Negotiations of Sir A. Burnes at Kabul—The Russian Envoy, Capt. Vikovich—Diplomatic etiquette in Asiatic courts—Letters relating to Capt. Vikovich—His proceedings at Kabul—Progress of Russian influence there—The English mission retires—Various documents.

THE information which the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan had previously received of the progress of the Persian ambassador was now confirmed by his arrival at Qandhar, which induced him to take open steps with regard to particulars which he had hitherto kept secret. He knew the weight and value of the influence of his old adherents, the Javanshers of Kabul, and was aware that the government of Persia, advised by Russia, was marching against Afghanistan, or at least Hirat, the gate of India. Qambar Ali

Khan, the ambassador of his Majesty Mohammed Shah of Persia, along with Mohammed Husain Khan, the agent of the Amir, had in the mean time arrived in Qandhar. The chiefs in this place detained the Persian envoy to enter into alliance with them; and being jealous of the Amir of Kabul, and desirous to gain the conspicuous favour of the Shah of Persia and of the government of Persia for themselves alone, they prevented him from prosecuting his journey to Kabul until they themselves had concluded a treaty of alliance with him.

"The Treaty which I, Qambar Ali Khan, here made with the respected Sardars, Kohandil, Rahamdil, and Mehardil Khan, on the part of His Majesty Mohammed Shah, is as follows:—

"In case the Sardars should send one of their sons to His Majesty, I promise to the Sardars the following in return:

"1. That the country of Hirat, whether it be taken by the power of the servants of the Persian Government, or by that of the Sardars, must be left to the latter; and that the Shah should not expect anything from them in return but service, and likewise should make no interference of any kind with their country or tribe in Afghanistan.

"2. His Majesty is not to form any connexion with the Afghans of any description, great or small, and also not to

employ them in case of any business with the Afghans; but in such case His Majesty is to have recourse to the Sardars.

"3. His Majesty is never to make friendship with Shah Zadah Kam Ram and Yar Mohammed Khan.

"4. On the arrival of the son of Sardar Kohandil Khan, His Majesty is to order the army at Meshid to march towards Hirat; and if Kam Ram and Yar Mohammed Khan resolve to take Qandhar, the Shah should prevent them by coming to Qandhar; and if they do not agree to this, then the Shah should come to Hirat.

"5. The Shah is also to give the Sardars means to pay the expenses of twelve thousand cavalry and infantry, and twelve guns, and the extra expenditure of the troops in the capture of Hirat; and, if the war lasts long, the Shah must furnish the expenses of the army.

"6. In case any harm befal the country of the Sardars, the Shah is to give them, in his own country, land equal to the value of their loss.

"7. The Treaty which I have now made with the Sardars, is to be approved of by His Majesty, and to bear the signature of Haji Mirza Aghasi, Mirza Masud (the Minister for Foreign Affairs), and also of the Ambassadors of Russia and of England, to secure confidence to the Sardars.

"QAMBAR ALI."

When Mohammed Husain Khan, the envoy of

the Amir of Kabul, who had returned from Persia with Qambar Ali Khan, discovered that the Sardars would not permit his companion to go to Dost Mohammed Khan, and had made an engagement with him, taking all the credit to themselves, and casting altogether the interests of his employer, the Amir, aside, he quitted Qandhar, and returned to Kabul. Dost Mohammed Khan, when informed of what had been done, secretly told him that he (Mohammed Husain) was not to pay any attention to what he (the Amir) might speak slightingly of the result of his mission, of his own letter, and of the power of Mohammed Shah; for such things would be said by him in order to make the British envoy believe that he did not care for the alliance of Persia, but was desirous to connect himself with the English, and this deceit was to be continued until he received the reply to his letter from "Petarpur" (St. Petersburgh). In secret he wrote, at the desire of Mohammed Husain Khan, to the chiefs of Qandhar, desiring them to send Qambar Ali Khan to him in Kabul, and upbraiding them that they had made a treaty with him for their own advantage, without consulting him at all, or making

him a partisan in it. Now the cunning Amir, according to his arrangement with his envoy, made as if he looked upon the result of his mission as a matter of trifling importance, and did not show him much respect. He deceitfully pretended, in the presence of the British envoy, and of Mr. Masson the newswriter, to be dissatisfied with the terms of the letter (farman) which the King of Persia had sent him in answer to his letter (arizah), while privately he felt proud of the arrival of such an honourable token of His Majesty's favour on his behalf, and sent a copy of it to the King of Bokhara, with whom he was in correspondence on terms of equality.

Letter from His Majesty Mohammed Shah, King of Persia, to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul.

" His Excellency, the repository of honour and glory, the most Noble of Nobles, the opponent of infidels, the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, Lord of Kabul, is honoured with our auspicious royal correspondence, and informed that the two letters addressed by His Excellency have been conveyed to our Royal presence by the hands of Haji Ibraham and Mohammed Husain Khan. The contents of each, displaying the rectitude of the intentions of that receptacle of

dignity, have been perused by us from the beginning to the end, and the objects and wishes of his Excellency have also been explained to us by the above messengers. All these circumstances being proofs of sincerity and purity of intention, they gave entire satisfaction to our Royal mind, and disposed us to feel confidence in his devotion.

" With regard to your representation of your connexion with this never-ending government, and with regard to your observations that Kabul is to be considered as one of the countries dependant on the kingdom of Persia, and that you are incessantly engaged in war with the infidels, notwithstanding whose superior strength you had hitherto been able to oppose them, and to preserve those dominions from subjection, but that if you did not receive assistance from us, you will be obliged to seek aid elsewhere, in order that an end might be put to these disorders; in truth these observations are written with sincerity, and it is apparent to our kingly mind that your Excellency is a distinguished warrior of Islam, who fights with valour for the faith, most surely expecting to prosper, both on account of his dependence on this never-ending government, and for the protection of Islam, and for the defence of our kingdom and religion; and from kingly generosity we deem it imperative on us to hold that refuge of dignity under the standard of our protection, and not to grudge or withhold from him assistance of any kind. Thus, before the arrival of the messengers of your Excellency, we had firmly resolved to march to Hirat, and to convey every description of aid to

your Excellency. We commenced our march from our capital, Tehran, with this intention. After our arrival at Bootan, it was represented to the ministers of this haughty state, that the cholera was raging with violence throughout the cities of Khorasan. We, therefore, for the sake of change of air, and in expectation of the cessation of this malady, moved to a healthy situation, and halted some days in the plains of Kalpoosh. In the meantime, it was represented to us, that Makhdum Quli, the Yamut (Turkman), having formed an alliance with Ala Quli Khan (chief of Khiva), had arrived at Karakala, which is situated near the Desert, with twenty thousand horse, the flower of the Usbeg and Turkman cavalry; and having fortified himself in that position, was waiting for the opportunity of the absence of our conquering army to produce disorder and tumult on the confines of our dominions. When this intelligence reached us we despatched our beloved brother, Feridun Mirza, with eight thousand regular infantry and four thousand cavalry, and twelve guns, to chastise these marauders. As soon as they became acquainted with the arrival of our troops, their courage failed them; and, not daring to oppose our forces, they abandoned their provisions and stores, and fled into the deserts. Our brother followed in pursuit of this wicked tribe; and near Qirchul, the cavalry, and some of the infantry, overtook and attacked them. From morning until night the fire of war was in a blaze, but the affair terminated in the defeat of the Turkmans. The greater part were killed, some were captured,

and the remainder fled into the barren deserts, and escaped from our warriors. After chastising this tribe we halted some time at the river Gurgam to arrange the affairs of that frontier; and then winter, and the season of snow and rain having arrived, it was impossible to continue the campaign. We despatched twenty thousand horse and foot, and forty guns, with ordnance and stores, to Khorasan, to be in readiness to march in the beginning of spring to Hirat; and we have resolved to march, with the assistance of God, with the remainder of the army, towards Khorasan, after the festival Nauroz. As there has been some delay in the advance of the victorious army, we have despatched Qambar Ali Khan to your Excellency; and have sent a diamond-hilted dagger to your Excellency, which is to be worn as the ornament of your faithful waist. We have commanded Qambar Ali Khan to detail the full extent of our royal favour towards your Excellency, and your Excellency will explain to Qambar Ali Khan your wishes and intentions, in order that they may be represented to us on his return."

Written in the month of Shaval, 1252.

Qambar Ali Khan, while detained and negotiating at Qandhar, was very brisk in his intrigues and correspondence with Mahmud Khan Bayat, and other Persians of influence, and in the confidence of the Amir. He had also employed secret emissaries to

collect information of the resources of the country, and particularly about the provisions. He had also requested the rich merchants of the Persian tribe to secure supplies for the army of Mohammed Shah, who, by his statement, was to penetrate Afghanistan in company with the Russian ambassador, as soon as Hirat had tendered submission. He possessed the following instructions, bearing the seal and signature of Mohammed Shah, and of his prime minister Haji Mirza Aghasi, the copy of which he gave, with his own agreement, as a security to the various merchants. Among them was Mulla Nasu, a wealthy trader, in the confidence of the chief Kohandil Khan, who secretly gave the copy of it to my newswriter, Mohammed Tahar.

Translation of a Copy of Instructions from the Persian Government to Qambar Ali Khan, envoy to Kabul.

"When you pass beyond the boundary of Qayan, at each stage that you reach you will detail the following particulars in a book which you will present to His Majesty on your return, namely, the state of the towns and villages, and population, with an account of all circumstances that happen during your journey, an estimate of the population

and the strength of the tribes at each place, as of the Sistanis, Biloches, Afghans, and Qazalbashes, and an account of the revenue and expenditure of those countries,—their produce, their principal articles of cultivation, and from what course of cultivation the most profit is made, and an account of the taxes levied from the people, and the imports or commerce: finally, whether there is water on the road, and whether the latter is level or mountainous. In passing through Bilochistan you must raise great expectations of the munificence and benevolence of His Majesty in the minds of the Khans of Belochistan and of Sistan. If these persons are favourably disposed towards Kam Ran, you should endeavour to persuade them to attach themselves to the service of this government, and try to inspire them with perfect confidence. You should, in particular, extol the generosity of His Majesty to Ali Khan, and declare to him that tidings of his services had reached His Majesty. All these Khans should assemble and prepare their troops, &c., at the time of the arrival of the fortunate camp, for they are to join the Royal Stirrup. At Qandhar he will deliver the firman and robes of honour to Kohandil Khan, and to his brothers, and excite his hopes of the generosity of His Majesty. He will attach himself strongly to Kohandil Khan, and he will inquire from him why, after the arrival of that letter (some former one), he did not send his brother and his son. Kohandil Khan must endeavour to send one of his brothers in advance to this court, while he himself will remain in his present situation, and await the

arrival of the Royal army. He will get his troops in readiness, and prepare as much cavalry as is practicable, for, please God, the campaign of Hirat will be entrusted to him. Qambar Ali Khan will declare to Kohandil Khan that if he has incurred any losses in the service of this government, reparation shall be made for them, and he shall experience His Majesty's generosity. Qambar Ali Khan will form an acquaintance with all the persons in authority, and with the Afghan and Qazalbash Khans, as well as with the Qazalbashes in general; and his object will be to excite their hopes of His Majesty's generosity. If they feel apprehensions, on account of the religious differences of Shias and Sunnis, he will endeavour to dispel their apprehensions, and will give them assurances that the justice and benevolence of His Majesty will not permit any distinction whatever to be made between them, and thus he will endeavour to render all persons desirous of serving this government. When he has finished his affairs in Qandhar he will proceed to Kabul, and deliver a dagger as a mark of His Majesty's favour to Dost Mohammed Khan, and he will convey the auspicious robes of honour to Navab Jabbar Khan. He will use the utmost endeavours to inspire them with earnest confidence in the sincerity of His Majesty's favour for them; and he will give them the strongest assurances that, after the arrival of the Royal army in those countries, favours of every description shall be unsparingly lavished upon them. Publicly he will declare that the object of his mission is to convey an answer to the petition

of Dost Mohammed Khan, and to deliver the auspicious robes of honour, but in private he will expatiate on the connexion of Dost Mohammed Khan with this country, and he will declare that, please God, Dost Mohammed Khan shall enjoy the royal favour to such an extent that those countries shall be placed completely in his possession, and he shall have entire control over them. Qambar Ali Khan will declare to Dost Mohammed Khan, that if he will avow his intimacy with this government, and will send one of his brothers or his sons to this court, it will prove of the highest advantage to him. In fine, his hopes of assistance from this country are to be excited, and he is to be persuaded that his only hope of safety is from this government. He is to be urged to prepare his troops, and he is to expect the arrival of His Majesty in spring. If the Amir is desirous of obtaining from Qambar Ali Khan a document declaring his connexion with this country, and prohibiting the Sikhs from molesting him, he is permitted to grant it."

While the Persian and the Afghan envoys were entering into alliance, and exchanging treaties for their respective governments, the Shah and his minister were not indifferent about other affairs, but busied themselves also in giving proof to the British ambassador that the court of Tehran was not only resolved to subdue Hirat, but that the reduction of the whole kingdom of Afghanistan into subjection

was talked of and intended. The Right Honourable Mr. Ellis, who was sent from England to congratulate the Shah on his ascending the throne of Persia, writes to Lord Palmerston in the following manner:—

"I thought it desirable to bring again formally before Haji Mirza Aghasi, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the views of His Majesty's Government in respect of the foreign policy best suited to the actual condition of Persia; but they both protested against considering the Afghans as a government or consolidated state, with whom relations of peace or of equality were to be maintained. They declared that a large portion of Afghanistan belonged to the Shah of Persia, and that he was at liberty to decide for himself how he would deal with the Afghans, as being his subjects.

"I inquired how far they considered the dominion of Persia to extend, and their reply was, to Ghazni.

"I feel quite assured that the British Government cannot permit the extension of the Persian monarchy in the direction of Afghanistan, with a due regard to the internal tranquillity of India, for that extension will at once bring Russian influence to the very threshold of our empire.

"The success of the Shah in this undertaking is anxiously wished for by Russia, and her Minister here does not fail to press it on to early execution. The motive cannot be mistaken. Hirat, once annexed to Persia, may become, according to the commercial treaty, the residence of a Russian consular agent, who would from thence push

its researches and communications, avowed and secret, throughout Afghanistan. Indeed, in the present state of the relations between Persia and Russia, it cannot be denied that the progress of the former in Afghanistan is tantamount to the advance of the latter; and ought to receive every opposition from the British Government that the obligations of public faith will permit.

"Aziz Khan (the Qandhar Envoy) held the same language to me as he had undoubtedly done to the Shah and his Ministers, namely, that the whole of Afghanistan was, with the exception of Hirat and its dependencies, ready to come under feudal submission to the State, who, in a fortnight, with the aid of the Afghans, like Nadir Shah, could push his conquests to Delhi.

"That the Russian Minister had had a long audience with the Shah on the preceding day, when the subject of discussion was the expedition against Hirat, in which the Russian Minister had recommended perseverance this year, on the ground that what now could be effected with ten thousand men, might not next year be practicable with a much larger force.

"It appears from the correspondence that Dost Mohammed Khan, on the 17th of September, despatched an agent, Haji Ibrahim, with letters to the Shah of Persia, placing himself, his country and its resources, at the disposal of the Shah, offering to co-operate in an attack upon Hirat, and seeking generally the protection of the Shah against the Sikhs."

On the departure of the Right Honourable H. Ellis, Sir John Macneil was appointed by the Government of England the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary at the court of Persia. His long residence in that country and acquaintance with the feelings and politics of its people, promised fair that the intrigues of Persia, guided as they were by the Russian ambassador, will not be permitted to pass without detection; for as the latter continued still unchanged in his designs towards Afghanistan, Sir John Macneil, in his various despatches to Lord Palmerston, gives a full detail of the united policy of the Persian and Russian states. The British minister did all he could to dissuade the Shah from undertaking the hazardous expedition against Hirat, and reminded his Majesty that such proceedings will be contrary to the expectation of her Majesty's Government, and will, in fact, be injurious to the interests of British India. Nevertheless the campaign was formed, and the Shah marched against Hirat. The messenger of her Majesty's embassy in Persia, bearing letters from Major Pottinger, was seized, maltreated, and deprived of his letters and

property. The Russian minister was in the meantime urging the Shah to prosecute his journey towards Hirat, and promised, on the part of his government, that if Persia takes possession of Hirat, she shall be released from the balance of the debt due to the cabinet of St. Petersburgh. Colonel Stoddart, accompanying the camp of the Shah, took always an opportunity to beg his Majesty to come to amicable terms with Hirat; but such remonstrances were of no avail. Ghuryan was taken, and Hirat besieged. Such disregard to the advice of the British representative was productive of serious injuries and insults to the agents of that government in all parts of Persia; and the inhabitants of the Residency at Bushir were threatened to be massacred by the populace. At length Sir John Macneil determined to proceed to the camp, and try to persuade Mohammed Shah fervently to accept the terms of the defenders of Hirat, and induce him to withdraw his army from the siege of that place. His Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador, wrote to the foreign minister of his Majesty to prevent Sir John Macneil from joining the

camp; and Mirza Masud really directed a communication to him on the subject, and desired him at least to postpone his departure till the instructions of the Shah were received; nevertheless he sent no answer, but set out to his quarters. On arriving at Ghuryan he received an official letter from the deputy foreign minister, conveying the orders of the Shah not to proceed beyond that place. Yet he joined the camp, and induced the Shah to allow him to mediate, and to adjust the differences. Then treaties were framed; at one time agreed to, and at another time refused through the advice of Count Simonich. In the meantime the British ambassador was not respected nor treated with the usual cordiality, and was thus compelled to leave the court and camp of the King of Persia.

Extracts from the Despatches of Sir John Macneil, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Persia.

"YET in this state of things, the Russian minister, as late as the 23rd ult., still continued to urge the Shah to under-

take a winter campaign against Hirat, an enterprise which, even were the army in the best condition as to feeling and preparation, would be extremely hazardous.

"Agreeably to intelligence communicated to me by Colonel Stoddart, it appears, that when one of my couriers was returning from Hirat to the capital, some horsemen were despatched from the royal camp in pursuit of him, who prevented him from continuing his journey, and brought him to the camp, where he was treated with great violence and indignity. Subsequently, when Colonel Stoddart had waited on His Excellency the Hajee, and explained to him that the above person was in my service, and when the Persian government was apprised that he was attached to my establishment, even then an order was issued for placing him in guard, and he received extreme ill-treatment from Hajee Khan Karabreghee, who used every description of threat towards him.

"It is reported and believed at Tehran, that the Russian minister has announced the intention of his government, if the Shah should succeed in taking Hirat, to release Persia from the engagement to pay the balance of the debt due by her to Russia; and the reason assigned for this act of grace is, that the Emperor desires to contribute that amount towards defraying the expenses of the campaign.

"I have the honour to enclose a copy of a communication I received a few days ago from the officiating resident at Bushire, by which your Lordship will perceive that a threat

of exciting the populace to commit violence, with an allusion to the massacre of the Russian mission, has been held out by the government of Bushire.

"The most obvious impediment to the interference of Great Britain in the quarrel between Persia and Hirat is the stipulation contained in the ninth article of the treaty of Tehran; but it can hardly be argued that this article binds us to permit the unjust and wanton destruction by Persia of the most valuable defences of India, while the Shah appears to be acting in concert with, and promoting the influence in those countries of, that very power whose exclusion from them has become the chief object of the alliance with His Persian Majesty.

"And as I find that the government of India entertains the opinion that the preservation of the integrity of Hirat is of vital importance, I have determined to proceed to the Shah's camp, and to endeavour, by every means in my power, to induce His Majesty to conclude a treaty with Shah Kam Ran, and to raise the siege of Hirat.

"Count Simonich has contented himself with despatching a messenger, and with inducing Mirza Masud to address me a letter, remonstrating against my going to the camp, on the pretext that, from the opinion entertained by people generally of the views on which I act, my presence in the camp will tend to strengthen the Afghans, which will be injurious to the Persian government.

"'According to what you yesterday mentioned verbally in

the apartment of His Excellency the Beglarbegi, it would appear that you intend speedily to proceed to the camp of His Majesty, &c., &c., the Shah; and as, in consequence of certain circumstances which have occurred, and of certain others which friends and enemies have conjectured and imagined to be connected with these, your Excellency's presence during the siege of Hirat will certainly and undoubtedly produce greater confidence and resistance on the part of the besieged, and this is obviously injurious to the interests of this proud and ever-enduring empire, and the British government certainly cannot desire to cause an injury to this state; therefore I request your Excellency, if possible, to abandon this journey, or to postpone it for a time, till instructions on this subject can be received from His Majesty the Shah.'

"At Ghuryan I received a letter from the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, conveying to me the Shah's desire that I would not advance beyond that place, as my presence could not fail to encourage the Hiratis in their resistance. I replied, that my duty to my own government, and even to the Shah, precluded the possibility of my complying with His Majesty's requests, which I greatly regretted, as it was at all times my anxious desire to comply with the wishes of the Shah. Next day I came in one march to the camp. All the attentions usually paid on such an occasion were omitted; and I have reason to believe that all my acquaintances in camp were either directly forbidden to visit me, or

received hints to the same effect which could not be misunderstood; yet I took no notice of these slights.

"On the morning of the 20th, before I had yet left the town, I heard of the arrival of Count Simonich in the camp, and I ceased to hope that the adjustment of the differences between Persia and Hirat was on the point of being effected. On my return to the camp, I found the Shah's views had undergone an important change: his manner was more abrupt and peremptory; and he at once rejected the proposed agreement.

"In about an hour the firing recommenced; and from that time the siege was prosecuted with renewed activity; for Count Simonich gave his advice as to the best manner of conducting it, and employed an officer of the Etat-Major, belonging to his suite, to construct batteries, and to carry on other offensive operations against the town. The Shah became elated with success. The Russian minister furnished a sum of money to be given to the Persian soldiers; and his countenance, support, and advice confirmed the Shah in his resolution to grant no conditions to the Afghans of Hirat.

"I have had the honour to report to your Lordship that more than one attempt at negotiation had failed.

"I need not repeat to your Lordship my opinion as to the effect which such a state of things would necessarily have on the internal tranquillity and security of British India; and I cannot conceive that any treaty can bind us to permit

the prosecution of schemes which threaten the stability of the British empire in the East. The evidence of concert between Persia and Russia, for purposes injurious to British interests, is unequivocal, and the magnitude of the evil with which we are threatened is, in my estimation, immense, and such as no power in alliance with Great Britain can have a right to aid in producing."

Now I must come back to the proceedings of Qambar Ali Khan, the Persian envoy, in connexion with the chiefs at Qandhar. A treaty of an offensive and defensive nature was formed between them, and the chiefs despatched their agent with him to wait upon his Majesty the King of Persia in his camp at Hirat. The credentials were submitted to the Shah with the treaty, and the letters of the chiefs delivered to M. Goutte, the Russian assistant ambassador, and General Bronski, with the camp of Mohammed Shah. The latter officer, although Polish, and in the service of Persia, was intimately connected with the Russian embassy in this country, and was intriguing with the Afghans, in order to promote the interests of the cabinet of St. Petersburgh. M. Goutte promised the approbation and protection of Count

Simonich, and which was finally despatched to the chiefs. After perusing such documents, which contain the avowal of the Russian agent, and seeing that the Russian ambassador becomes a guarantee in arrangements concluded between Persia and Qandhar, there remains no place for any doubt concerning the aim and the intentions of the Russian Government. The treaty to which he becomes a party or guarantee must of course be thought to be good for himself. On consulting these matters deliberately, the Shah and the Russian functionaries addressed letters to the chiefs, approving of the treaty they had sent by their agents with Qambar Ali Khan.

Mohammed Shah to Sardar Kohandil Khan, Chief of Qandhar.

(After compliments.)

"ALAHDAD KHAN has arrived in my camp, and made known your requests, and the favour of the king towards you has increased. Whoever shall in confidence come to me shall meet with nothing but kindness, and shall gain his ends, and if you are still firm and true to your word, you may consider the favour of the king

firm to you too. Always write the state of your wishes and hopes to me, and consider that you will gain all your ends."

M. Goutte, the Russian Agent with the Shah, to Kohandil Khan.

(After compliments.)

"ALAHDAD KHAN and Mir Mohammed Khan have delivered your letter to me, and I was much delighted at its contents. You wrote to tell me you had determined on becoming subservient to Mohammed Shah, and had sought his protection. You may depend upon my fulfilling the engagements I have entered into with you, and consider it to be advantageous to yourself to perform any service to the government. I cannot express, in writing, my friendship for you, and care for your welfare. Regarding your making Russia the guarantee in this connexion, your wishes will meet the Russian ambassador, to whom I have forwarded your letter, and with it I have written my own opinions on the subject. I have cultivated your friendship at the suggestion of Haji Aghasi. It is better to despatch Omar Khan without apprehension, and I will write to the Persian government, to remove all apprehensions at your sending your son. He will be treated with great distinction by the Shah and his nobles. When you have despatched your son, the treaty, drawn up by Qambar Ali, will be entered into by the means of Hajee

Aghasi, and I, as your friend, tell you to be under no apprehension at sending your son. After he arrives, everything you wish will be done through Haji Aghasi; send your son quickly, and trust him to God. When I receive an answer from the Russian minister (Simonich), I will forward it."

Major-General Bronski to Kohandil Khan.

(After compliments.)

"ABDUL WAHAD BEG and Alahdad Khan have arrived with Qambar Ali Khan, and have extolled to me your acts and nature. Consider the subjects on which Captain Vikovich conversed with you, connected with your welfare; besides these, I have other subjects to speak on. You have done well in seeking the protection of Persia; this Alahdad informed me you had done, and I am much pleased with your messages. Alahdad Khan has requested me to write to you; he has himself witnessed my influence here, and has been himself favourably received by the Shah, and asked to know in what favour the Sardars of Qandhar were with him (the Shah). Nothing but good will result from this your connexion with the Shah; so much good, indeed, that I cannot put it to paper. Be convinced that your serving the Shah will turn out every way to your advantage. The Shah treats every one according to his deserts, and your deserts are above all others. By all means send Mohammed Omar Khan speedily; he will be treated with nothing but kindness,

and on this subject the assistant to the Russian minister, M. Goutte, has written, as also Haji Aghasi, who has written to confirm what Qambar Ali had done (at Qandhar). By the fortune of the Shah, Maimana, the Hazarahs, and Char Adinak (Annak) have been subdued as completely as could have been wished; and as the Asif of Mashed had written, no doubt the son of Mizrab Khan Wali, and the brother of Sher Mohammed Khan, and Gurdzanum Khan and others will come over to the Shah (as hostages). Persia is not what it was; I wish your connexion with Persia were speedily accomplished. Mohammed Shah has hitherto avoided taking Hirat out of kindness to its Mahomedans: but, by the blessing of God and the fortune of the king, Hirat will be taken; everything will be for the best. It will be all the better the speedier you despatch Mohammed Osmar Khan."

Copy of the Draft of a Treaty sealed by Kohandil Khan, or the proposed Terms of a Treaty between His Majesty Mohammed Shah and Kohandil Khan, the Sardar of Qandhar, under the sealed guarantee of His Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian Ambassador.

"I, as Minister Plenipotentiary of the Russian government at the Court of Persia, guarantee the fulfilment of the following conditions of treaty between His Majesty Mohammed Shah, and the Sardar of Qandhar.

"I. The principality of Hirat to be bestowed by the Shah

on the rulers of Qandhar, as a reward for their faithful services performed to him since his accession to the throne of Persia.

"II. The territories and tribes at present subject to the Sardars of Qandhar to be preserved to them free of violence, injury, or confiscation.

"III. The Persian government in no way to amalgamate with their own subjects any of the Afghan tribes, great or small, nor to employ them upon service unconnected with their own affairs, and all business relative to the Afghan states to be submitted by the Persian government to the rulers of Qandhar.

"IV. The Prince Kam Ran and his minister Yar Mohammed Khan to be excluded from all participation in the councils of Persia.

"V. Should any hostile movement be made against Qandhar by Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, the English, or the Amir of Kabul, aid to be afforded by the Shah to the Sardars.

"VI. In the event of the sons or brothers of Kohandil Khan coming with an auxiliary force to the royal camp, no violence or injury to be in any way offered to the persons or property of them or their followers, and none of them to be detained as hostages, with the exception of a single son of Kohandil Khan, who will always remain in the service of the Shah.

"VII. A contingent of twelve thousand horse and twelve guns to be supplied by the Qandharis to garrison Hirat, receiving pay and rations from them, and to assist the Shah on occasion of service.

"VIII. On the arrival of the treaty duly ratified at Qandhar, Mohammed Omar Khan to be immediately despatched to the royal presence.

"IX. After the presentation of this prince, the necessary money for the outfit of the horse and artillery to be made over by the Persian government to the Sardars of Qandhar; Sardar Mehardil Khan to be then sent with a thousand horse to the royal camp. This prince being presented, and mutual confidence being established between the Shah and the Sardars, no other demand to be made upon the Qandharis by the Persian government than that of military service.

"Should Mohammed Shah fail to fulfil any of these several conditions, or depart in any way from the stipulations, I, as Minister Plenipotentiary of the Russian government, becoming myself responsible, will oblige him, in whatever way may be necessary, to act fully up to the terms and conditions of the treaty."

I have brought the lengthened arrangements of the Qandhar chiefs with the Persian and the Russian governments to a plain conclusion; and it would be desirable now to turn our attention to the affairs of Kabul, and the negotiations of Sir Alexander Burnes with the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. Agreeably to mutual understanding, as has already been stated, he pretended to be angry with the style

of the letter of the Shah, and did not come to a final settlement with the English envoy, waiting the arrival of the Persian army in Hirat, and an answer from the Emperor of Russia to his letter. He was always in possession of the daily progress of the Russian minister; and through the Hazarah country received secret communications concerning the movements of the Russian agent towards his capital. He kept this under very strict secrecy; and if any talk was made of the power of Persia, and the influence of Russia, by any one in his court, while he knew that there was a person to inform us of it, he simply treated such ideas with contempt and laughter, calling the Russians and Persians "Lotis," or buffoons. In short, he always tried to keep off despair from Sir Alexander Burnes by his pleasing manners and eloquence, and thought that his craft was not known to him. This was, however, not the case, for the British envoy knew his meaning, and told and wrote to him several times to come to an immediate understanding; but he put off from day to day, writing letters to the chiefs of Qandhar and Qunduz, making mention of his feigned intention to establish friendship with the British.

At length the expected news came of the arrival of Captain Vikovich, the Russian agent, in Ghazni, on his way to the court of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. Hereupon the Amir, and his minister Mirza Sami Khan, planned privately, and it was soon conveyed by his "peshkhidmat" to Sir Alexander Burnes secretly, that Dost Mohammed Khan was to call upon the British envoy, and reporting the progress of the Russian agent towards Kabul, offer to act as guided by him (Burnes). If the latter did not approve of his coming to the city, then the Amir was to secure for himself a document from Sir Alexander Burnes, binding his government to pay him money, and aid him with forces on the plea of giving an insult to the cabinet of St. Petersburgh; and after having that paper he was at liberty to receive Captain Vikovich, and attach himself to Russia or to the English, whichever offered him the highest proposals. However, the Amir called upon Sir Alexander Burnes, who, hearing his sayings, and knowing previously the meaning of his conversation and of his visit, said that the Amir would commit no wrong in receiving Captain Vikovich, and, on the contrary, will make known his own

hospitality and good sense in distant regions. Here the Amir was disappointed at the failure of his scheme; yet still persevering in his design, he tried to induce Sir Alexander Burnes to commit himself in some other way. In our presence he spoke to his minister in a manner that showed as if he felt no interest in the mission of St. Petersburgh, and that he therefore thought it was better to place him in the house where the other Persian lier (Mohammed Husain) was living, and again feigned to ask the opinion of Sir Alexander Burnes on the subject. He still adhered to his former sentiments, and replied that the Amir was ruler of Kabul, and knew best to treat and receive agents and guests in his own house. Finding that Sir Alexander Burnes was not a man to become the subject of his fraudulent proposals, he adopted at last what he had always meant. He was aware that his brother Navab Jabbar Khan, and also other relations, and certain chiefs, were in favour of the English mission, and might make intrigues with Captain Vikovich also. He therefore found no better place and charge for the Russian agent than that of his confidential minister Mirza Sami Khan. He knew that the

people whom he suspects will be known there, and will thus fear to visit him in his house; and that this will keep his communication with the Russian envoy entirely secret. He was accordingly treated with great respect and civility, and was allowed to go and meet the Amir clandestinely in the private apartments of the minister. As he had not his own equipage, the son of the Mirza always accompanied him to sights and to the places of chief note, which attention was similarly shown to Sir Alexander Burnes for three days after his arrival in the Bala Hisar. This was the kind of honour paid to the envoy of the Emperor, which the British news-writer, Mr. Masson, mentions in his book, saying that he was under surveillance.

Captain Vikovich delivered his credentials, which consisted of a letter from the Emperor of Russia, and another from His Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador. These were written in the Persian and in the Russian languages. The Amir had no bounds to his joy and pride inwardly, but outwardly he feigned to show the English envoy and news-writer that he never knew till that very moment that he had even written a letter to St.

Petersburgh. He denied the transmission and the proceedings of Husain Ali, and of Mirza Sami Khan; and the latter took the credit upon himself (as Mr. Masson says) of gaining another ally for the Amir. All this ignorance of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, and the writing of the letter by the Mirza without his knowledge, was nothing but a fabricated invention of them both to mislead the English functionaries. By adopting this cunning line of policy he created a difference of opinion among a number of the persons who formed the mission of Sir Alexander Burnes, and at the same time he resolved to show them that he is an object so valuable and dearly sought by the united great powers of Russia and Persia, that the Emperor and his ambassador had addressed to him such flattering epistles while he never thought of seeking their friendship.

The Russian part of the Emperor's letter was copied by Major Leech, and the Persian was translated by me, which translation was unfortunately plundered from me at the time of the insurrection of Kabul, and could not be recovered afterwards, although I procured and purchased some of the

papers in Kabul. Mr. Masson says it bore no signature, and was written directly by the Emperor himself; which affirmation, according to him, raises some doubts of its authenticity. On the contrary, according to Asiatic usage, these are the very reasons for confiding in the veracity of the letter. In all countries of despotic government, as Afghanistan, Turkistan, and Persia, and their neighbour the Russians, letters are forwarded under the seal and not under the signature. There were several letters of the Emperor of Russia shown to us by the late minister, Qoshbegi, to the address of the King of Bokhara, written direct from his Majesty, never from his secretary. The letters addressed by the minister do not stand so high in the estimation of the Asiatic monarchs as those written from the sovereign himself. It is considered a most strong feeling of regard and friendship, and confidence on the part of the writer. The cabinet of St. Petersburgh being aware of such a prevailing custom, and desire of its neighbours the Ozbegs and Persians, generally writes to them under the seal and name of the Emperor: and so in the same way was the letter written to the Amir of Kabul.

It is worthy of making such a remark in this place, and further to prove this, to the end that it may be clearly known how much the Asiatic monarchs are offended in being addressed by the minister or secretary, and not from the Sovereign himself. On the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of his predecessors, and the detention of Colonel Stoddart, the British Government was, on several occasions, obliged to begin communication with the King of Bokhara. More than fifty letters from Sir William Macnaughten, the British representative, and several others from the Earls of Auckland and of Ellenborough, were sent by special and highly paid messengers to the Amir of Bokhara; but he was always displeased at their arrival, and never returned an answer to any of them, and dismissed the bearers without any reply. He always told them, and also Colonel Stoddart, that he was an independent king, and should like to correspond with the British Sovereign directly, and not with the British representatives at Kabul, and the Governors-General of India,—(farman farma), whom he called the servants of the state. In the same manner it was felt by the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. He con-

sidered the letter of the Emperor of so much more value and importance than that of Count Simonich, that the letter of the ambassador did not even stand in the first rank.

The contents of the letter from the Emperor of Russia to the Amir of Kabul, as far as I remember, from the translation I made of it at the time, to be sent to the government of India, were not of any political nature. It plainly acknowledged the receipt of the Amir's letter, and assured him that all the Afghan merchants shall be well received in the empire of Russia, justice and protection shall be extended towards them, and their intercourse will cause to flourish the respective states.

I have heard many people in their talking, say, that if the letter of the Emperor touched upon no other points but those of trade, there was no necessity for taking such alarm at its appearance in Kabul, and that it was exaggerated in importance, as it appeared to be felt by the Indian government. Though I do not boast of being well versed in the histories of India written by talented English authors, but from what I have learned from them I come to the conclusion that the disguised word or appellation for

politics is commerce, and that commerce is the only thing which expands the views and policy of territorial aggrandisement. To my great surprise I read from the book of Mr. Masson the doubts he entertained of the true character of the mission of Captain Vikovich. These doubts must have arisen from some extraordinary sources of information, or else from the ambitious motive of making himself conspicuous in differing from the opinions of those who had more apparent, wise, and just means to consider that agent a true representative of the court of St. Petersburgh. Count Nesselrode is the best authority on such a subject, and he has plainly acknowledged this mission to Kabul, and the following letters will further show that he was not an adventurer, but an accredited envoy from Russia.

Mohammed Shah of Persia to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul.

(After compliments.)

"AGREEABLY to my affection and kindly feelings towards you, I wish to bestow great favours on you, and anxiously wait to hear from you.

"In these days the respectable Captain Vikovich, having been appointed by my esteemed brother the Emperor of

Russia, to attend your Court, paid his respects on his way, stating that he had been honoured by his Imperial Majesty to deliver some messages to you: on this I felt it incumbent on me to remember you by the despatch of this Raqam, to convince you that your best interests are deeply engraven in my mind.

"Concerning the favours of my brother Majesty attached to you, let me hear occasionally from you; and by rendering good services to him you will obtain the protection of this Royal house."

His Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian Ambassador at Tehran, to Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul.

"THE respectable P. Vikovich will wait upon you with this letter.

"Your agent Haji Husain Ali has been attacked by a severe illness, and therefore he stopped at Moscow: when the intelligence of his bad health was conveyed to the Emperor, a good physician was ordered to attend, and endeavour to cure him as soon as possible. On his recovering I will not fail to facilitate him in his long journey back to Kabul.

"Knowing your anxiety to hear from this quarter I have hastened to despatch the bearer to you. He was ordered to accompany your agent to Kabul, and I hope on his arrival at your court that you will treat him with consideration, and trust him your secrets. I beg you will look upon

him like myself, and take his words as if they were from me. In case of his detention at Kabul you will allow him often to be in your presence, and let my master know, through me, about your wishes, that anxiety may be removed.

" Though the great distance has often prevented the regularity of my correspondence with you, I am always very happy to respect and serve your friends, in order to show my friendly opinions towards yourself.

" The cause of our often hearing from each other merely depends upon friendship and acquaintance.

" I have some Russian rarities to forward to you: as the bearer (P. Vikovich) is lightly equipped, it was beyond his power to take them along with him; but I will take the first opportunity to convey them safely to you, and now have the pleasure to send you the under-mentioned list of them.

FIRST KIND OF SAMUR.

	Piece.
Gilt and silvered cloth	1
Cloth with do. flowered	1
Ditto with gilt do.	1
Ditto with green gilt flowers	1
Zari Abi, with gilt do.	1
Ditto qirmiz of gold	1
Ditto do. of silver	1
Parcha hazir, red and white	1
Ditto painted	1

	Piece.
Parcha hazir, white with gold flower . . .	1
Alachah with do. . . .	1
Ditto yellow with silver do. . . .	1
Ditto red and green	1
Ditto light blue	1
Ditto with red flower	1
Ditto green	1
Ditto banassh	1
Ditto red and light blue	1

Before we proceed to notice the negotiations of Captain Vikovich in Kabul, it will be desirable to describe here briefly his conference with the chiefs of Qandhar. He told them that the King of Persia does not pay any attention to the advice of the British ambassador, but has attached himself to the Russians, who avowedly and secretly will lend him every aid to promote his object. Major Leech also reports thus:—

"Regarding the Russian officer, now in Kabul, with a letter from the Emperor, Mehardil Khan informed me that the following were his messages to them from the Emperor: that if they would make friends with the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, the Russians would assist them with money to make war upon the Sikhs, and to regain Multan and Derajat; and that they would also aid them in regain-

ing Scinde; that Mohammed Shah owed them one and a half crores of rupees, and they would give an order on him for that sum, the money to be divided between the Amir and them equally, as also the countries thus gained; that the Russians could not furnish men, but would furnish arms; that they in turn expected the Sardars to become subservient (farman bardar), and to receive a Russian resident; that they were to make war when desired, and make peace equally at the Emperor's will. This officer told them that the English had preceded the Russians in civilization for some generations; but that now the latter had arisen from their sleep, and were seeking for foreign possessions and alliances; and that the English were not a military nation, but merely the merchants of Europe. Sardar Mehardil Khan also informed me that several merchants had seen that officer in Bokhara, but were ignorant of the object of his visiting that city."

"With regard to the active part that Russia is taking in the movements of Persia, the Sardar assured me he had good authority to state that Russia had taken measures to keep the kingdom of Mohammed Shah tranquil in his absence, by means of letters where they were feared, and of troops where they were not feared."

The residence of Captain Vikovich in the house of the minister was very favourable to his general deportment and secret negotiations or intrigues.

His intercourse and negotiations with the Amir, conducted only through his confidential Vazir, were not made public, as were those of the British envoy. With him the communication was held sometimes through the Navab Jabbar Khan, or the Mirza Imam Vardi, and sometimes the Nayab Amir. If anything was ever known to us of the proceedings of the Russian envoy, it was only through the secret information of the Peshkhidmat of the Amir, and of the minister. In some circumstances the intelligence gained by Mr. Masson, the news-writer, was satisfactory, and without the slightest doubt. The Russian envoy told the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan that he has been instructed by his government to assure him of using its influence to adjust matters with the Sikhs, and to request the Court of Lahaur to restore all the Afghan territories to the ruler of Kabul. On the day of the festival of Nauroz (equinox) the minister Mirza Sami Khan had a party of some selected persons of state, to which Captain Vikovich was also invited. In the middle of their enjoyments, it was considered by him that his not asking the English envoy, while the Russian agent was present, will openly reflect a suspicious and uncivil

light on his conduct, and on this consideration he sent his son to ask Sir Alexander Burnes to favour him with his company. He justly refused to accept the invitation, saying that if the Mirza did not think proper, for his own convenience, to invite him previously, like his other guests, he need not take the trouble to join his assembly. After a long and frequent intercourse Sir Alexander Burnes asked me to go to the minister. Here all the Persian and the Ghilzai chiefs were present. The minister and Captain Vikovich sat a little higher than the others, on the "Nihali;" and the former, to show his civility, removed from his seat, where he placed me by the side of the Russian envoy. While the music was going on, the minister was conversing on politics, sometimes with M. Vikovich and sometimes with me, inquiring the number of the English troops stationed at Lodiana; the distance between the divisions of Karnal, Merat, and Kanpur; and whether the Mahomedans were the major part of the army, or the Rajputs; and what were the feelings of the natives of India towards the decayed household of the great Taimur. Understanding the manner in which the inquiries were made, I came to the conclusion that every question

was put to me according to arrangements made previously to my joining the party; and therefore, confining myself only to the answer of his questions, without commenting on politics, I pretended to show my astonishment at the great demand for Kashmir shawls in the Russian dominions. This afforded an opportunity to Captain Vikovich, who said, although the valley of Kashmir was nearer to the boundary of British India, yet the good treatment which the merchants receive from his government, along with the high price for their commodity in Moscow and at St. Petersburgh, had gained good will for the inhabitants of this valley. He then said to the minister it is wonderful that the Amir of Kabul lays his claims upon Peshavar, while he keeps the name of Kashmir exclusively to himself, though it is a principal source of the wealth of the Durrani empire. The minister replied that the policy of the Afghans is different from that of the other nations. They first catch hand, and then the arm, meaning, let us first gain Peshavar, and the claims on Kashmir will soon follow. Captain Vikovich said that, if it pleases God, his presence in Lahaur with the letters of the Emperor and of the Shah of Persia,

of which he was the bearer, will induce the ruler of the Panjab to accede to the terms of the Amir in giving Multan, Derehjat, Kashmir, and Peshavar to their original masters, the Afghans. He added that he was authorized to say to the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, that if that chieftain does not act in a friendly manner towards the Afghans, Russia will send money easily to Bokhara, whence the Amir can make arrangements to bring it down to Kabul to raise troops, and to fight with the Sikhs for the recovery of his country. The Russian agent also issued a report that fifty thousand men of Russian regiments were in readiness to land in Astrabad, in order to keep peace in the rear of Mohammed Shah, who would then march towards the Panjab; that such movements would rouse all the discontented chiefs of India to rebel; and that the English, who are not soldiers, but merely mercantile adventurers of Europe, would not dare to assist Ranjit Singh, knowing that the Afghans are succoured by the warlike nation of Russia.

The presence and the promises of the Russian envoy changed now even the outward deportment of the Amir towards the British mission. He de-

manded a written bond for the restoration of Peshavar, besides a large sum of money to enable him to make himself the Supreme Lord of Afghanistan. In the mean time Captain Vikovich stated that the law of England does not permit the Governor-General of India to act without consulting the Council and the three authorities; whereas he and Count Simonich, or any other Russian agent, had the same power as the Emperor himself, and need not seek nor wait for the advice of the others. All these proceedings were communicated to the Governor-General of India, who judiciously placed not much credence at first in the professions of the mission; but when the state of things took an unfavourable attitude for the preservation of the tranquillity of India, he was then obliged to treat the whole subject not slightingly, but as an important affair. Some people, who do not know the real character of the Afghans, and especially that of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, say, "Why did not the Earl of Auckland give the small sum of money demanded by the chiefs of Qandhar or the Amir?" but there are hundreds of old nobles living in Kabul who will agree with me, that the refusal of the money

from the Governor-General was judicious and wise. It would not have served to bind the Amir to co-operate with the British, nor to promote their interests; but it would have afforded him ample means for using his arms against the Sikhs and against our interests.

The Sardar Mehardil Khan, one of the brother chiefs of Qandhar, advised by the Shah of Persia and by Count Simonich, arrived at Kabul with the avowed purpose of frustrating the designs of the British envoy, and inducing the Amir to give him his dismissal and to settle his affairs with the Russian agents. He and the Amir now began to talk thus, that they really want a written engagement from the British government, not only to protect them against Mohammed Shah, but also pledging its influence, money, and arms to force Ranjit Singh, a faithful ally of the English, to give up all the Afghan territory, which, on the other hand, the Russians and Persians have offered to recover for them.

The winter was now past, and still the Amir did not dismiss the Russian agent from his court, as he had promised in his intercourse with Sir Alexander,

and had written in his letter to Count Simonich. On the contrary, he entered more and more into close intimacy and conversation in public with him, and invited him openly to pass evenings and have dinners in the palace with him. Now it became evident that the Amir of Kabul was unfeignedly attaching himself to the Russian government, and that the further stay of Sir Alexander Burnes was not honourable to the name and credit of his government. He made his last report, therefore, of the steps which the Russian agent had taken, and of the throwing off of the mask which the Amir had hitherto assumed and worn to deceive us, stating circumstantially the proofs that he and his minister had become colder in their manners towards us, and warmer in their intercourse with Captain Vikovich. At last the letter of the Governor-General arrived for the Amir, stating that if he was inclined to attach himself to the other powers, he had better give leave for departure to Sir Alexander Burnes, which alternative was readily accepted. Our failure in the negotiations soon became public, and the people, especially the traders, feared to deal with the mission. The bankers would not lend the money

necessary for our journey, and the muleteers refused to supply conveyances unless permitted by the Amir. Two or three days passed without any progress in the preparations for the return of the mission to Peshavar, and at length I waited upon the Amir with a note from Sir Alexander Burnes. After I had dined with him I delivered it into his hands, and Sardar Mehardil Khan read it before him. The tone and the words of the letter were written strong, but just, and worthy of the British envoy. This naturally roused the mind of the Amir and of his party, and after assuring me of orders to supply us with everything the mission wanted, the only word I heard him saying to his adherents and to the Qandhar chief was that he had not anticipated that matters would go so far, nor that the Russian government would come so openly forward to further his ends in spite of the English. He continued, smilingly, that as the British envoy was offended, he should not lose time to stir up Vikovich to inform his government of the state of affairs at Kabul.

Moreover I am astonished to read in Mr. Masson's work that the Amir Dost Mohammed was exalted at the submissive humility of Sir Alexander Burnes,

who always addressed and answered him with his hands closed and the word of "Gharibnavaz," and that he (Masson) had never given information of Vikovich having letters for the Lahaur chief. I had more opportunities than Mr. Masson to be present when Sir Alexander Burnes had interviews with the Amir and with many other independent rulers of Asia, but I never heard him accosting any of them in the humble manner described by this worthy gentleman. His tone of voice with the Amir of Kabul and with the chiefs of other places was conspicuous, and bore the accents of dignity worthy of his government and rank; and I have heard the chiefs myself saying that his "Guftar va Kirdar" (meaning his sayings and doings) bespeak of his talent and his high notions. With regard to his misrepresenting the information which Mr. Masson gave him, I can only say that no British officer charged with such high functions of his government, and entrusted with the welfare of his country, as Sir Alexander Burnes was, would commit such a gross act as to misrepresent the information in order to support his own views. Every line of the four volumes of the valuable work of Mr. Masson speaks

of the author's sound judgment and independent character, it cannot be denied; but not one human being on the face of the earth will impartially admit that his opinions did always stand firmer and wiser than those of the other men who at that time conducted their arduous duties honourably, and who are now no more to defend themselves. I rejoice to see the independence of Mr. Masson duly estimated; but if that independence were accompanied by the least shadow of that gratitude which he owed for the patronage he received from Sir John Macneil, Sir Alexander Burnes, Sir Claude Wade, Sir William Macnaghten, and other functionaries, it would have reflected a laudable credit upon him. But alas, they are now of no use to him, and the work is published. In broad words, if an obliged Englishman were to make such return to his obliging and national friends as Mr. Masson has made, what then can be expected from an Asiatic like myself? I have great regard for the person, talent, and character of Mr. Masson, but I beg to say that I do not like his principles as displayed in throwing loads of disparagement on the memory of those who lost their lives in the service of their country, and are not now able to answer the

remarks of Mr. Masson or of any one besides. He quotes some lines of the various notes from Sir Alexander Burnes, Sir William Macnaghten, and the then chairman of the India House, &c., to prove the authenticity of his opinions; but unfortunately they are not alive to give publicity to the notes which Mr. Masson wrote to them at that time. They are dead, and the valuable work comes out. May success attend the sale, and the second edition appear with alterations!

Captain Vikovich made a very long and interesting report of his negotiations with the chiefs of Qandhar and the Amir of Kabul, and despatched it for his Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador with the Shah of Persia. Our agent, however, found means to obtain a copy of that interesting document before it reached its destination.

The Russian Ambassador at Tehran, to Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, of Kabul.

(After compliments.)

"In these happy days the respectable Haji Ibrahim Khan, one of your people, arrived at the door of His Majesty the Shah. He has now got leave to return to

you, and I embrace the opportunity to write to you, being induced to do so by the praises which I am always hearing concerning you, and the friendly conversation which has passed between your man and myself. Through him, therefore, I send this friendly letter, and hope that you in future will keep up a correspondence with me.

"Considering me your friend, I trust that you will strengthen the bonds of friendship by writing to me, and freely commanding my services, as I shall be happy to do anything for you.

"Look upon me as your servant, and let me hear from you.

(Sealed) "GRAF. IWAN SIMONICH,
Minister Plenipotentiary of the Russian government."

Letter to the Amir of Kabul, forwarding the preceding from Haji Ibrahim, his Agent at Tehran.

(After compliments.)

"I REACHED the camp of the Shah in the month of Jamadi-ul-aval. When His Majesty learned the contents of your letter he was happy and kind to me; at that time the Shah was at Chashma Ali, seven marches from Tehran, near Dam Ghan; he stated that on arriving at Khalpush he would discharge me with some messages for you. On his reaching Khalpush he went to punish the Turkmans, and I accompanied His Majesty as desired. When we

returned to Sharood the winter set in, and the Shah, by the advice of his counsellors, left his artillery there, abandoned the intentions of going to Hirat this year, and returned to Tehran. He ordered his nobles to get ready by Nauroz, for an expedition to Hirat.

"The Shah directed me to inform you that he will shortly send an Elchi, who, after meeting you, will proceed to Ranjit Singh to explain to him, on the part of the Shah, that if he (Ranjit Singh) will not restore all the Afghan countries to you, the Amir, he must be prepared to receive the Persian army. When the Shah takes Hirat he has promised to send you money and any troops you may want.

"The Russian ambassador, who is always with the Shah, has sent you a letter, which I enclose. The substance of his verbal messages to you is, that if the Shah does everything you want, so much the better; and if not, the Russian government will furnish you (the Amir) with every thing wanting.

"The object of the Russian Elchi, by this message, is to have a road to the English in India; and for this they are very anxious. He is waiting for your answer, and I am sure he will serve you. The letter you sent by Agha Mohammed Kashi pleased the Shah very much, and he (Mohammed Husain) will soon return to you.

"The Asef-ul-Daulah, the ruler of Khorasan, has written to the Shah that he saw Yar Mohammed Khan on this side of Farah; he says he has not power to oppose the

Shah, but he will not serve him until the Shah gives him money to take Qandhar and Kabul.

"I send you the letter (Firman) of the Shah, which will, I trust, meet your approbation."

Major Mackeson, British Agent, Camp Shekwan, to Sir Claude Wade, political Agent, Lodiana.

"THE Russian envoy at Kabul gave out that he intended to visit Lahaur, in order to have some friendly conversation with Maharajah Ranjit Singh, and to send an account of his Highness's military power and resources to the Emperor."

Major Mackeson to Sir Claude Wade.

Camp Khappur, 12th Feb., 1838.

"HIS Highness next adverted to a letter he had received from Peshavar, mentioning that the Russian envoy intended to come on to Lahaur."

Sir Alexander Burnes to Sir William Macnaghten.

Kabul, 4th March, 1838.

"I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India, that I have more grounds for believing that Captain Vikovich, the Russian agent at Kabul, is charged with letters from his government to the Maharajah Ranjit Singh. I observe that

Colonel Stoddart mentions this as a surmise to Sir John Macneil; and a few days ago Mr. A. Ward wrote to me from Peshavar, to know if the 'on dit' of M. Vikovich's going to the Panjab were true.

"I have made every inquiry on this subject, and in the course of yesterday Mr. Masson was informed that the Russian agent had letters for the Maharajah, and that the purport of them was to the effect, that if his Highness did not withdraw from Peshavar, the Russian government would compel him."

Sir Claude Wade to Sir W. H. Macnaghten.

21st March, 1838.

"I HAVE the honour to transmit an open letter to your address from Sir A. Burnes, dated the 4th instant, repeating, from Kabul, the report which had formerly reached Peshavar, that the mission of Captain Vikovich would extend to Lahaur."

Sir Alexander Burnes to the Earl of Auckland.

Kabul, 3rd Dec., 1837.

"IN the despatches, which I forward by this opportunity to Sir W. Macnaghten, your Lordship will find a report of the extraordinary circumstance of an agent having arrived at this capital direct from St. Petersburgh, with a letter from the Shah of Persia and from the Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador at Tehran.

"Before I enter upon the messages delivered by the

agent to the Ameer, it is proper to state the information which has reached me regarding what has passed at Qandhar. In my official communication of the 9th September last, your Lordship will remember that I reported the departure of one Haji Mobin on a mission to Persia; and, as it was believed, in pursuance of the advice of the Russian ambassador. That individual accompanied Mohammed Shah to Khorasan, and was requested by His Majesty to await the arrival of Captain Vikovich, and to proceed with him to Qandhar. The connexion between Russia and Persia in this part of the transaction leaves little doubt of the whole being a concerted plan between these powers. The statement made by the emissary to the Sardars of Qandhar was to the effect that Russia had full influence in Persia: and that they should assist the Shah, and draw on him for money, and if their drafts were not paid, that the Russian government would be responsible for their discharge; but that they should follow the wishes of Mohammed Shah, if they sought the Emperor's good offices, and on no account ally themselves with the English nation. This declaration, if true, is certainly most explicit; but though it has been communicated to me by a man whose other reports entirely tally with all that is passing in Qandhar, and who is the individual that made known to me five months ago the then inexplicable nature of Haji Mobin's mission, I should not wish your Lordship to give to it that confidence which I seek to place on the report of events that have transpired at Kabul.

"On the evening of the 20th inst. the Amir received the Russian messenger. On the agent's producing Mohammed Shah's raqam, the Amir felt a degree of irritation which he could hardly control, and said, in Afghani, that it was an insult to him, and a proof of Mohammed Shah's being guided by advisers; for his master, the Emperor, wrote him a letter, and the subservient Shah of Persia arrogated to himself the right of sending him a raqam, or order, with his seal in the face of the document. The agent was then dismissed, and invited to the Bala Hisar on the following day.

"The communications which passed on this second occasion have also been made known to me, and are of a startling nature. M. Vikovich informed Dost Mohammed Khan that the Russian government had desired him to state its sincere sympathy with the difficulties under which he laboured; and that it would afford it great pleasure to assist him in repelling the attacks of Ranjit on his dominions; that it was ready to furnish him with a sum of money for the purpose, and to continue the supply annually, expecting, in return, the Amir's good offices. That it was in its power to forward the pecuniary assistance as far as Bokhara, with which state it had friendly and commercial relations; but that the Amir must arrange for its being forwarded on to Kabul. The agent stated that this was the principal object of his mission; but that there were other matters which he would state by-and-by; that he hoped the Amir would give him a speedy answer to despatch to St. Petersburgh, and

that with reference to himself, he would go, if dismissed, along with it, though he gave the Amir to understand (and under which impression he still continues) that it was his wish to remain, at least for a time, in Kabul. The report of this interview has been communicated to me from two sources, and they both agree in the substance of what passed.

"Having thus laid before your lordship these strong demonstrations on the part of Russia to interest herself in the affairs of this country, it will not, I feel satisfied, be presumptuous to state my most deliberate conviction that more vigorous proceedings than the government might wish or contemplate than have been hitherto exhibited are necessary to counteract Russian or Persian intrigue in this quarter.

"By one class of politicians everything regarding the designs of Russia in this quarter has been disbelieved. By another, the little which has transpired has excited immediate, and, in consequence, what may be termed groundless alarm. For the last six or seven years I have had my attention directed to these countries, and I profess myself to be one of those who do believe that Russia entertains the design of extending her influence to the eastward, between her dominions and India. With her commercial operations, she has invariably spread the report that her designs were ulterior; and the language of her agents has lately been, that as the affairs of Turkey and Persia are adjusted, she sought an extension of her influence in Turkistān and Kabul.

Such reports would deserve little credence if unsupported by facts; but assisted by them, they gather higher importance, and exhibit views which, but for the greatest vigilance, might have eluded notice for years to come.

"There being, therefore, facts before us in the transactions passing at Kabul, it seems impossible, with any regard to our safety, to look on any longer in silence. If Russia does not entertain inimical feelings directly to the British in India, she avows that she wishes for the friendly offices of the chiefs on our frontier, and promises them her own in return; so that it is useless to conceal from ourselves that evil must flow from such connexions, for this is, indeed, casting before us a challenge. It is a true maxim that prevention is better than cure, and now we have both in our hands. We might certainly wish to delay a while longer before acting; but it is now in our power, by the extended and immediate exercise of our already established influence, to counteract every design injurious to us.

"I trust that the free expression of my sentiments will not prove displeasing to your Lordship: I am emboldened by the confidence which has placed me here to speak according to my conviction."

Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Sir Alexander Burnes.

20th January, 1838.

"His Lordship attaches little immediate importance to this mission of the Russian agent, although he will bring all

the circumstances connected with it to the notice of the home authorities, as it undoubtedly marks a desire, which has long been known to exist on the part of the Russian government, to push at least the influence of their name to our Indian frontier; and the proceedings, especially of the Russian envoy at Tehran, in regard to it, are open to much observation.

"His Lordship is much gratified at the deference to our views shown by Dost Mohammed Khan, in requesting your advice as to the reception of this agent; and he entirely approves your having sanctioned his being admitted to the presence of the Amir, and treated with becoming civility. If he be not already gone from Kabul, you will suggest to the Amir that he be dismissed with courtesy, with a letter of compliments and thanks to the Emperor of Russia for his proffered kindness to the Kabul traders. His mission should be assumed to have been, as represented, entirely for commercial objects, and no notice need be taken of the messages with which he may profess to have been charged.

"This of course will be recommended by you, in the event of the Amir being firmly disposed to abide by our good offices. If he should, on the other hand, seek to retain the agent, and to enter into any description of political intercourse with him, you will give him distinctly to understand that your mission will retire; that our good offices with the Sikhs on his behalf will wholly cease; and that, indeed, the act will be considered a direct breach of friendship with the British government. It has been before at

different times stated to you, that the continuance of our good offices must be entirely dependant on the relinquishment by the Amir of alliances with any power to the westward."

From the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul to His Excellency Count Simonich.

"YOUR friendly letter was delivered to me by the respectable Captain Vikovich, and I was delighted to read this your second epistle.

"If I were to offer full thanks for such kindness, it would be as impossible as to confine the river in a small vessel, or to weigh its water with stones.

"I fully understand the messages which you had sent to me through Captain Vikovich, and confidently expect that your imperial government will support and defend my honour, and by doing so, it will be easy to win the hearts of friends.

"I thank you for the offer you made to arrange my affairs, and further for your informing me that you do not merely tell me so; but that you will fulfil your promise. I expect much more from your friendly government, and my hopes have been increased. Though the distance between us is great, it does not prevent our approach in heart. My mind is put in peace by your friendly messages, and I hope it will continue so.

"Before the arrival of the agent of your government

(Captain Vikovich), the English government had deputed Sir Alexander Burnes, who is now with me in Kabul. That officer is sowing the seeds of friendship between Ranjit Singh and myself; nothing is yet settled, however, but let us wait the result.

"On the winter ceasing, and the roads opening, I will despatch Captain Vikovich by any road he prefers. At present, on account of the snow, I have postponed his departure.

"I hope you may continue to enjoy happy days."

From Captain Vikovich to Count Simonich.

"HAVING departed from Qandhar 2nd (or may be the 27th) November, of the past year, 1837, I arrived at Kabul on the 8th of December. The reception of Dost Mohammed Khan, and his condescension towards me, were sufficiently marked—polite as kind.

"I was lodged in the house of the first minister, Mirza Abdulemi (probably Abdul or Abdallah) Khan, and after three days' (waiting), I demanded an audience, when I delivered the imperial credentials [literally the most high letter] and the letter of your Lordship; and to that I added verbally, that the object of my coming was to evince to him, and to the rulers of Qandhar, the very gracious wishes (or inclinations) of the Emperor; and to declare that His Majesty the Emperor was pleased to return a gracious reply to the letter of Dost Mohammed Khan, and vouch-

safed to him protection and friendly alliance; that the rulers of Afghanistan having made up or reconciled their differences among themselves [this passage is rather guessed at, being unintelligible] should acknowledge or place themselves under the dominion of Persia, with whom Russia is connected by truly friendly relations.

"The Amir (Prince), in showing his satisfaction at the imperial letters (credentials), gave me to understand that a friendly treaty (on the part) of the Afghans with the Persians could not be (subsist), because an English envoy, Sir A. Burnes, now here, has concluded (or was concluding) a mutual treaty. That Dost Mohammed Khan having collected as large an Afghan army as possible (should go, or was to go) to the assistance of Kam Ran against the Persians besieging Hirat; and by that treaty the English bound themselves to give (supply) to the Afghans twenty thousand muskets [I cannot exactly make out the word thousand; but suppose it. Some words here about the Russian alliance not legible]; and to make over to the possession of the Afghans, Peshavar, and the other conquests of Ranjit, on the right bank of the Indus; and that the treaty was despatched to Calcutta, for the information of the Governor-General of India, Lord Auckland. Thus terminated my first interview with the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, but his vizier Mirza Abdool (Husain) Khan almost daily comes to me, and makes various inquiries regarding the power of Russia and of the other European governments. In the meantime Sir A. Burnes departed (went) for Qandhar, ac-

companied by the lieutenant of artillery, Leech, in order to (induce) the Qandhar rulers (to enter into) a treaty, and (to withdraw themselves) from friendly relations with the Shah. The English have established between Kabul and Qandhar a kind of (letter-post); and they have written (or it has been written) that the Persians are defeated, have retreated to Meshid, and have suffered extremely from hunger (want of provisions). All this has occasioned Dost Mohammed Khan to conduct himself very coldly towards me; and then, as he daily (converses) with Burnes, from my arrival here to the 20th February, I have hardly (or two or) three times been in his presence. Having discovered (or learnt) from Mirza Abdul Khan that he [I do not make out whether Abdul Khan is here meant, or Dost Mohammed] had a secret distrust of (or dislike to) English influence (or connexion), I endeavoured, as much as possible, to strengthen it, and succeeded in shaking his previous (or at a former time) confidence in and friendship towards them.

"In the meantime, on the 21st February was received from Lord Auckland a reply distinctly (decidedly) to cancel (refuse) all that Burnes had negotiated (or agreed upon); but in his letter (not clearly made out) he does not advise (dissuades) the rulers of Afghanistan to enter upon any alliance with Persia or with other powers; that the Afghans were in a great measure indebted for their independence to the support of the English, who restrained Ranjit Singh from conquest.

"The true cause (reason) for such proceeding of Lord

Auckland, as Burnes declares, is the following:—Ranjit having received from the Company a proposal to give the Afghans Peshavar, and other conquests, that he would willingly comply with the wishes of the Company upon receiving intimation to that effect [some reference here to the territories between the Indus and Kashmir, and securing the succession to his heirs, but I cannot make connected sense of it]. On receiving such proposition from Ranjit, Lord Auckland replied, that in consequence of (or on the occasion) the approach of the Persian Shah to Hirat, he decidedly (objects) and advises Ranjit to retain Peshavar, and to oppose himself to the movements of the Shah, who, as reported, is resolved to extend his march (or conquest) on the borders of India. Dost Mohammed Khan abandoning his hopes of assistance (not clearly made out) on the part of the English, has sent to Qandhar (the purport) of the letter received from Lord Auckland, and requested for consultation and co-operation one of the Sardars of that place; Sir A. Burnes, on his part, has written to Lieut. Leech (being) at Qandhar, that he should by all means endeavour to dissuade the Sardars from going to Kabul, and with Dost Mohammed Khan. But the ill-conducted intrigues of Leech have been disclosed, and roused the Sardar Kohen Khan, and led the Afghans to adopt the contrary course—to join Dost Mohammed Khan, and break off all connexion with them (the English), and place themselves under the sway of Persia, with the guarantee of Russia; that the Shah should supply (one hundred thousand) mus-

kets for the equipment of Kabul and Qandhar army, and that after taking Hirat, the Shah himself with his troops should advance into Afghanistan, for the recovery of the provinces conquered by Ranjit. In demonstration of the sincerity of this proposal, the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, and the Sardar Kohen Khan,—as one of their proceedings. Mirza Abdul Khan, who not only possesses the entire confidence of Dost Mohammed Khan, but influences all affairs in Afghanistan particularly,—and the Sardar Mehir Khan. They request me to set out (in the course of a month) to forward (or obtain from your Lordship) the guarantee—that the Persians shall fulfil the conditions upon which the Afghans agree to submit themselves to the sway of Persia; and for that purpose I intend leaving Kabul on the 26th or 27th April. Sir Alexander Burnes has frequently demanded of Dost Mohammed Khan, that I should be immediately dismissed, and that the rulers of Afghanistan should engage not to enter into any negotiations (or relations) with Persia and Russia; but seeing that now affairs have taken entirely another turn, he does not wait for the arrival of his companions, who, last autumn, went into Turkistan, and having instructed Lieutenant Leech to proceed from Qandhar to Shikarpoor and Hydrabad, (where he probably) suspects that the ruler of Sindh may enter into the confederation forming between Persia and Afghanistan, he left Kabul on the 19th (or may be 17th) instant (April); and went through Peshavar to Lahaur. I have the honour to present for the favourable consideration of your Lordship, a brief

description of Afghanistan. I venture to infer (conclude) that with some pains and discretion the Russian government (administration) — here — as well as in commercial, as political relations. The geographical position of Afghanistan makes it the only — through which a conqueror can — from Qandhar to the very shores of the ocean; — barren desert, which can never be passable by any kind of military force (or detachments); on the north and north-west the road (way) from Turkistan is bounded (closed) by the strong pass of Hindu Kush, which has only two roads hardly passable for the space of four (I cannot make out whether the next word is months, or some term implying distance, I think the former), (several words here not legible)—for military stores, or supplies of an army. The people of Afghanistan are warlike, and if the mutual animosities existing between the several authorities (ruling powers) were reconciled, they could oppose the united forces of all India. Being a place where it is difficult (as it is in all such places) to display (or enforce) the maritime power of Russia; it nevertheless participates (lends its aid) in the reliance and influence which your Lordship has ably succeeded in diffusing throughout Persia. In these countries your ———, which extends as far as the exploits of the Persian armies, accompanies the name of your Lordship, and no one of the inhabitants of Kabul, nor of Qandhar, doubts that the Shah, when leaving Tehran, gave over to your Lordship the reins of government—for my part, I do not doubt, that, by the aid of this, something permanent may be done (established here); the

English have appreciated the full importance of this country in a political point of view (bearing), and they have spared neither trouble nor expense to gain a footing (or to instal themselves) in Afghanistan, as, without doubt, is known to your Lordship. Their successes, in respect to the defence of Hirat, and this mission of Sir Alexander Burnes, as it appears (to have been), cost him (or them), as far as I can ascertain, three hundred rupees, he (or they), during eight years residence here, (or possibly it may be 'when here eight years ago'), made purchases to the extent of one hundred and fifty rupees. From the year 1832 there has been here an established English agent, receiving a salary of one thousand rupees. He left Kabul, together with Sir Alexander Burnes. On my arrival at Tehran, I shall have the honour more particularly to lay before your Lordship the affairs of Afghanistan. At present I venture to beg most humbly that the desired guarantee (by the Afghans) should be acknowledged by your verbal condescension in the camp of the Shah.

(Signed) "VIKOVICH, Lieutenant."

CHAPTER XII.

The British Mission leaves Kabul—Iniquitous counsels given to the Amir respecting it—He rejects them—The Amir attaches himself wholly to Russia—Departure of Captain Vikovich—Honours paid him—Affairs of Sindh—Opinions current in Hindustan relative to Russia—The Asiatics anticipate reverses for the British power in the East—Correspondence, and other Documents—Reasons for the advance of the Army of the Indus—Negotiations set on foot by the British Government.

HAVING delivered the last letter of the Governor General to the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, and had an audience of leave with him, the British Mission quitted Kabul on the 26th of April, 1838, and his son Gholam Haidar Khan escorted us to a distance of four miles from the city. The minister Mirza Sami Khan came to Butkhak, and presented Sir Alexander Burnes and myself with three horses in a most miserable condition. He remained and dined with me, and during the night we had a long conversation with that officer. He stated that Captain Vikovich has promised positively the pecuniary aid of Russia and the military assistance of Persia

for furthering the objects of the Amir; and the minister then trying to make us believe his regret at our departure, and his neutrality of feeling in regard to the success of the Russians at the court of Kabul, said to Sir Alexander Burnes that all this was brought about by the Sardar Mehardil Khan of Qandhar. When it was pointed out to him that wisdom cannot permit one to place much credence in the extravagant proposals made by distant powers to the Amir, the minister replied that it is not Persia that we rely upon, but Captain Vikovich in Kabul, and Count Simonich in the Persian camp, who is a legally authorised representative of the Emperor of Russia. These he said have become guarantees, and have made agreement to support the Amir in recovering the Afghan territory from the Sikhs. Since Russia is one of the greatest powers of Europe, and her representative with the Shah of Persia is reckoned to be an Emperor, and that this race of men is celebrated for adhering to their word, as is well known in Khorasan, all this leaves little room to doubt that the Russian ambassador could have proposed and agreed to anything which was not authorised by his government, and that the cabinet

of St. Petersburgh will not act accordingly. He says that the letter of the Amir to the address of the Governor-General will follow us, and shortly afterwards we bade adieu to the minister and came to Tezin. The Mission was escorted to Jelalabad safely by Nazir Ali Mohammed, and yet various reports were privately received from Kabul that some of the chiefs, as Mohamud Khan Bayat and Agha Husain, were advising the Amir to massacre the Mission, or at least to detain it till a large sum of money is paid by the English government for its ransom, which will furnish him with the means of defence against his impending danger. The Amir wisely paid no attention to such rash counsels of his friends; and Dr. Lord and Mr. Wood, who were invited by Mir Mohammed Morad Beg of Qunduz, returned to Kabul after the Mission had departed from that city. They suffered no molestation, but being received coldly by the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, they were sent away safely to Jelalabad, and thence followed us by the Kabul river to Peshavar. Lieut. Wood had also heard from authentic sources, and observed on his way through Kabul, that the Amir and Captain Vikovich had grown very familiar

with each other, and that the former had attached himself without reserve to Russia.

There is no doubt that although the Mission of Sir Alexander Burnes proved to be unsuccessful in its chief purpose, yet it afforded ample information at the time of the proceedings and the steps which the Russian government had openly taken into the politics of Afghanistan. The Sardar Mehardil Khan and the Amir addressed letters respectively to Mohammed Shah, King of Persia, stating all the circumstances of the negotiations, and of the failure and departure of the British envoy. Captain Vikovich told the Amir that he will transmit a sum of fourteen lakhs of rupees to him; and the Russian ambassador in Persia requested the Shah to accede to all the terms of the chiefs of Qandhar and of the Amir of Kabul, since they had entered into alliance and friendship with Russia.

The Amir at length dismissed Captain Vikovich with all honour; and appointing Habbu Khan an agent on his part to go with him, he desired Mehardil Khan to take them safe to Qandhar. Here, on this occasion, the Russian agent was treated with much more distinction than he was on his way to

Kabul. The chiefs, at his request, unanimously wrote letters and treaties for the satisfaction of the Russian ambassador at the Persian court, who had made himself guarantee on the part of his government that he will not only make these chiefs masters of Hirat, but will cause Mohammed Shah to give Ghuryan also to them; and they on their part sent Mohammed Omar Khan with about two hundred and fifty horse to wait upon the Shah and Count Simonich. The Amir also, though becoming much more unpopular by his alliance with Persia and with Russia, was engaged in repairing the Bala Hisar of Kabul and the fort of Ghazni, and in urging the Shah and Count Simonich to subdue Hirat and to push on to Kabul. The arrival of Mohammed Omar Khan, the son of Kohandil Khan, the principal chief of Qandhar, in the Persian camp, and the seizure of Frah by Mohammed Saddiq, another son of the chief, gave no proof of want of vigour nor any encouragement to the Afghans in their hopes of now defending Hirat; and many were desirous to desert, and even to surrender it to the Qandhar party in the Persian camp, if any one would venture to make such a communication to them. Captain Vikovich

returned again from Hirat to Qandhar, and supplied the chiefs with ten thousand Russian ducats, which Kohandil Khan distributed amongst his troops. He also informed him that Mohammed Shah had given permission to Count Simonich to bring Russian forces to reduce Hirat and to send money to the chiefs in Afghanistan; and that, according to the European law, his presence in Qandhar will prevent the Governor-General of India and its allies from taking any hostile attitude towards that city. That officer wrote also to the Amirs of Sindh to keep themselves easy, and promised that he, with the Sardars, will in three months hence be on the banks of the Indus with them. Such communications undoubtedly would not be favourable to the cause of the British in Sindh; and moreover the chiefs of Qandhar publicly declared that they are paid and requested by the Shah and by Russia to proceed against the territory of Hirat, and that if Qandhar during their absence was attacked by any inimical power, the Russian government, acting on its agreement and guarantee, will supply them with money to recover it from the enemy. When the chief started on his march towards Hirat, Captain Viko-

vich supplied him with grain brought from the villages under the authority of Persia; and he had cunningly spread a report that he was acting under the authority of Count Simonich and of the Shah of Persia, who is the ally of his master the Emperor. He accordingly accompanied the camp of the Sardar, and the Shah of Persia promised to send Agha Sayad Mohammed with money to the Amir of Kabul, and the Russian ambassador sent at this time some presents to the Amir (perhaps those left behind by Captain Vikovich). The intelligence of this despatching of the letter of the Russian agent to the Sindhians was found by Sir Henry Pottinger to be true, and there was no doubt that the Russian name and influence was materially injurious to British interests even as far as to the eastern side of the Indus. The rumours of the power and bravery of the Russians, exaggerated by distance and talked of in Oriental style as it passed from one person to another, had given ample reasons for restlessness in the minds of the discontented chiefs of India. This was indeed not limited to Mahomedans only, but extended to the Rajput chiefs also of that country; and every one of them was looking forward with

anxiety for the expected reverses of the English. Tired of tranquillity, and aspiring and longing for that pomp which all Asiatics enjoy during public confusion, they were whispering their wishes and preparing themselves to be ready at a moment's call, and to throw off the mask of quiet discontent against the rule of the British government.

Lord Auckland to Amir Dost Mohammed Khan.

Simla, 27th April 1838.

(After compliments.)

"I HAVE received your letter, and fully comprehend its contents.

"It has been a source of much regret to find that your views of what is most for your advantage have led you to decline the good offices which I have tendered, for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation between you and Maharajah Ranjit Singh, on the only terms on which I could, consistently with what has appeared to me just, engage to exercise my mediation for the settlement of the unhappy differences existing between you.

"With the explanation, however, of your sentiments which you have now afforded to me, my further interposition in this affair could not lead to beneficial results; and as, in so unsettled a condition of things, the continuance of Sir A. Burnes, and of the officers under his orders in Afghanistan,

would not be conducive to the good ends which I had hoped to accomplish by their deputation, I have now issued orders to them to return to India; and they will accordingly set out, on receiving from you their dismissal, for which their immediate application will be made to you.

"I have to express to you my acknowledgments for your attention and kindness to these officers while residing in your dominions.

"(Signed) AUCKLAND."

Sir Alexander Burnes.

"ON the night of the 25th April, I had the honour to report for the information of the Right Hon. the Governor General, that I had had my audience of leave with the Amir of Kabul; and I quitted the city on the following day (the 26th), being escorted about two miles from its gates by three of the Amir's sons; and also accompanied to the first halting-place, Butkhak, by Mirza Sami Khan. It is now my purpose to lay before his Lordship such additional particulars as illustrate the opinions of Dost Mohammed Khan, and the views which it seems he has in contemplation, and which, since we can no longer act with him, will, as it appears to me, require counteraction. I inquired into the truth of these reports in circulation regarding the Amir having actually gone over to Persia, and sought the security of Russia. The reply was, that they were too true. I asked what had really occurred, and

learned that some of the Amir's family, or that of his brothers at Qandhar, were to be sent with letters to the Shah; that Captain Vikovich had promised to get the guarantee of Russia to all their arrangements; and that when Hirat fell, either to send part of the Persian force through the Hazarahjat to Kabul, or furnish the Amir with money to expel the Sikhs from Peshavar, which, he had said, was the more easily to be exacted from the Shah, who was a large debtor to Russia.

"It will be remembered that the Amir, in my last interview with him, offered no palliation of the intercourse which he had had within the last few days with Captain Vikovich.

"I have had intelligence of it that leaves little or no doubt on the subject.

"Captain Vikovich has already asked leave to set out forthwith to Hirat.

"Whatever are the plans of Persia and Russia, it will now be no fault of the chief of Kabul if they come not to maturity. He still gives out that he would not trust Persia alone, but seconded M. Goutte and Captain Vikovich, he considers the Russian guarantee will gain for him all his ends, and, besides being able successfully to contend with the Sikhs, as certain of ministering to his ambition, and fixing his supremacy."

Amir Dost Mohammed Khan to Lord Auckland.

(After compliments.)

"ALL the conversation which has passed between Sir A. Burnes and myself from the day of his arrival is well known to your Lordship, and consequently it is needless to repeat it.

"I also wrote a second time respecting the determination of the King of Persia, and the expectations of this friendly nation (Afghans) for the protection and enlargement of their possessions, which it had hoped from the British Government for a long time.

"It is well known to your Lordship that the Afghans expected very much from the English, from the day the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone came to Afghanistan, for that gentleman made a treaty with the Afghans of an offensive and defensive nature:

"Since Sir A. Burnes discovered that the Afghans were quite disappointed, and he has no powers from your Lordship to satisfy this nation, he is now returning to India with my permission.

"When Sir A. Burnes reaches India he will minutely speak to your Lordship on all the circumstances of this place. There are many individuals who have enjoyed the favour of the British; but our disappointment is to be attributed to our misfortune, and not to the want of the British Government."

From Lieutenant Wood.

"THE non-arrival of our baggage detained us a few days in Kabul, during which we had an ample opportunity of observing how far recent events had influenced the public mind. The Qizalbash or Persian parties, numbering many of the most respectable citizens of Kabul, rejoiced at what had occurred; but the mass of people, Afghan and Tajik, were at no pains to conceal their discontent.

"Dost Mohammed Khan was engaged at chess when we entered the apartment; and while the interview lasted, he affected to be more intent on his chess-board than on the political game which we well knew was the uppermost in his mind. His manner was at first cold."

Sir Alexander Burnes.

"WITH reference to Russia, her proceedings are open to so much remark, after Count Nesselrode's disavowals, that, I presume she must either disavow Captain Vikovich and M. Goutte as her emissaries, or be made responsible for their proceedings. I have only again to repeat my most deliberate conviction, founded on much reflection regarding the passing events in Central Asia, that consequences of a most serious nature must, in the end, flow from them, unless the British Government applies a prompt, active, and decided counteraction. I do not offer these as my opinions, founded on the periodical publications of all Europe (though the

coincidence of sentiment in all parties does not want in weight), but as formed on the scene of their intrigues; and it is my duty, as a public servant, earnestly to state them to my superiors.

"As I am despatching this commission from Jelalabad, half way to Peshavar, I have received good information that the Amir has been constantly with Captain Vikovich since I left, and that officer has earnestly solicited permission to proceed to Hirat by the direct road of Hazarajat, and offered the solemn pledges to do all which the Amir wishes, under a month. He has also bound himself to address Maharajah Ranjit Singh, after retiring from Peshavar; and when Dost Mohammed Khan asked if he had authority to do so, he replied that he had a letter to that potentate which would soon set matters right.

"Explaining further the plans of the chiefs of Kabul and Qandhar, consequent on their new alliance with Persia and Russia.

"The day after you left Kabul the Amir had a private meeting with the Sardar Mehardil Khan, Reshid Akhundzadah, and Mirza Sami Khan. They have settled that Mohammed Azim Khan (the Amir's son), and Mirza Sami Khan, should leave Kabul, and having joined Mohammed Omar Khan and Mulla Reshid, at Qandhar, proceed to Hirat, and wait upon Mohammed Shah on the part of the Kabul and Qandhar chiefs.

"Sardar Mahardil Khan has addressed a letter to Mohammed Shah, which, after being sealed by his brothers at

Qandhar, will be sent by express. The contents of the letter are as follows:—

"'On the arrival of Qambar Ali Khan, your Majesty's agent, at Qandhar, it was resolved that Mohammed Omar Khan should wait upon the Shah on the part of the Qandhar chiefs. Meanwhile, Sir Alexander Burnes reached Kabul, as an agent of the British Government, on which our elder brother Dost Mohammed Khan sent a letter, preventing us sending Mohammed Omar Khan to his Majesty on the following grounds: the British Government and Ranjit Singh are very near the Afghans, and Mohammed Shah is a distance of three months' journey; and that Amir feared these two powers may be offended, and endeavour to ruin him, which his Majesty could not prevent. Regarding the superiority of our brother (the Amir), and seeing the good of the governments, we recalled Mohammed Omar Khan from Giriskh, on account of the confusion; when we received authentic information of his Majesty's arrival at Hirat, I left Qandhar, and came to Kabul, and brought about the dismissal of Sir A. Burnes, and induced the Amir to send his minister Mirza Sami Khan to his Majesty, and from Qandhar Mohammed Omar Khan, and Mulla Reshid, to wait upon his Majesty.'

"The contents of the Amir's letter to Mohammed Shah are as follows:—

"'When Qambar Ali Khan reached Qandhar, Sir A. Burnes also came to Kabul, on the part of the English Government. He prevented my entering into an alliance

with your Majesty. As the Shah was at a distance I kept Sir A. Burnes in evasive discourse, and having the sure information of your Majesty's arrival at Hirat, I dismissed him instantly. I have now appointed my son Mohammed Azam Khan to wait upon your Majesty. I will obey the orders (amar) of his Majesty in future.'

" The chappar has been despatched with the above letter to Hirat.

" This proposal of the Mirza to the Amir originates in his sagacity, for he has settled every thing with Captain Vikovich, who has promised that on reaching the camp of Mohammed Shah he will send the Amir the sum of forty lakhs of rupees. The above officer is boasting very much what he will do to protect and exalt the Amir, but it is needless to mention those affairs minutely.

" After your departure from this place, the Amir sends for Captain Vikovich daily to his court, and makes arrangements with him which are as yet not written.

" On Tuesday evening a man by the name of Bahar, in the service of Kohandil Khan, came to Kabul with letters from the Russian agent with Mohammed Shah to Captain Vikovich. Alladad, who had accompanied Qambar Ali Khan, has also returned to Qandhar, with other letters from Mohammed Shah and the Russian agent, to the address of the Qandhar chiefs.

" His Excellency has instructed the Shah to satisfy the chiefs of Qandhar, and the Amir of Kabul, at any rate, and give whatever they want, since they have written to him (the

ambassador) through Captain Vikovich, and accepted the friendship of Russia.

"The Amir has dismissed Captain Vikovich with all honour and respect; and that officer has proceeded to Qandhar, along with Sardar Mehardil Khan, accompanied on the part of Dost Mohammed Khan by Hubu Khan Barakzai, enjoying the Amir's confidence.

"The Qandhar family will wait on the Shah without delay, and be introduced through Captain Vikovich; and it is understood at Kabul, that the Amir will send his own subsequent messengers direct to Hirat by the Hazarah road.

"(Signed) A. BURNES."

"After perusing the treaty the Russian envoy took it to Mohammed Shah, who agreed to every article of it. The envoy made himself guarantee for the fulfilment of its articles, and sent it back to the Sardars, along with his own letter, the contents of which are as follows:—

"'Mohammed Shah has promised to give you the possession of Hirat, and I sincerely tell you that you will also get Ghoryan, on my account, from the Shah. It is, therefore, advisable that you send your son Mohammed Omar Khan to Hirat, where you must also afterwards come.

"'When Mohammed Omar Khan arrives here I will ask the Shah to quit Hirat, and send your son along with his Majesty to Tehran; I (the Russian envoy) will remain

here with twelve thousand troops; and when you join, we will take Hirat, which will be afterwards delivered to you!'

"On the arrival of this letter the Sardar had no bounds to his joy, and sent it to Kabul. The report was, that it did not please the Amir at all.

"Sardar Mehardil Khan has returned to Qandhar. The Russian Agent (Vikovich), who accompanied him from Kabul to this place, was received here with honour, since the Russian Envoy at Hirat had written strongly to the Sardars, that they must treat Vikovich with all sorts of consideration; and believe his tongue, oath, and words, as if they were from him (Russian Envoy).

* * * * * *

"The Sardars have sent Mohammed Omar with two hundred and fifty horsemen to Hirat, to wait upon Mohammed Shah, and have sent an elephant for His Majesty, and some shawls for the Russian Envoy.

"The Sardars have sent one hundred and fourteen letters, &c., ordering the heads of Sistan, Farah, Sabzvar, and other Afghans, to join their son Mohammed Saddiq Khan at Farah. They have also informed them that the Russian Envoy has made them the 'Mir Afghan,' and has promised to give them possession of Hirat, when, if any of them will not obey our (Sardars') orders, he will be banished from the country for ever.

"You must also know that the days in which you saw

Dost Mohammed Khan are departed. He is no longer popular. His joining the Russians has utterly ruined him in the eyes of all Mahomedans.

"This has quickened Dost Mohammed Khan's plans; he has set out about repairing the Bala Hisar of Kabul, and the fort of Ghazni; he has also increased his taxes in the Kohistan; and, as you know, this only increases his difficulties. He now sends messenger after messenger to the Russian Ambassador and the Shah, urging them to settle affairs at Hirat, and come on to Kabul, when the country will be theirs.

"You take no notice of the fire which has been kindled in Khorasan and Afghanistan. You will see how far it extends in the course of six months.

"Mohammed Shah has written a letter to the Sardars of Qandhar. The contents of the letter were much; but tell you the result of it.

"Since the arrival of Mohammed Omar Khan, His Majesty has become sure of the attachment of the Sardars at Qandhar, to Persia, and that they should be at ease on account of their son, Mohammed Omar Khan; after taking Hirat, His Majesty will send Vikovich to them, and the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, with the amount of nine lakhs of rupees, and then they must hold themselves ready to receive the orders of the Shah.

"This letter was sealed by the Shah, his Minister Mirza Haji Aghasi, and the Russian Ambassador.

"Mohammed Omar Khan was received by ten thousand

Persian cavalry, and presented with four guns and five pairs of dresses of honour. The Shah has given him a place near his own tent, and his Agent, Alladad Khan, lives with the Russian Ambassador. Mohammed Omar Khan gets two hundred ducats every day for his expenses; and the Shah has told him that he will do much more for the Sardars than he told them in his letters.

"This intelligence was sent by Mohammed Omar Khan to his father Kohandil Khan, through Khodadad Khan, chappar (courier), who arrived here in eleven days from Hirat.

"Two days after the arrival of Mohammed Omar Khan, the Persians made an assault on Hirat, and lost four hundred people, besides two hundred or three hundred wounded. Borowski and Samsan have been dreadfully wounded, and the former nearly killed. The head of one of the Russian officers was cut off and taken into the city by the Afghans. After this engagement both parties returned to their own quarters.

"The arrival of Mohammed Omar Khan at the Persian camp has deeply disheartened the Afghans at Hirat. Many of them have turned against each other, and if the Sardars at Qandhar write to Mohammed Omar Khan, he would easily take Hirat, for the Afghans would likely surrender it to him.

"Mohammed Sadiq Khan, the eldest son of Kohandil Khan, has possessed Farah, and is repairing it.

"On the 18th October, I wrote to Captain Leech about

Captain Vikovich, the agent of the Russian Ambassador, on which you are also informed.

"On the 26th of the above month, Captain Vikovich reached Qandhar, having left Mohammed Shah at Kosan, on the other side of Ghoryan. Sirdar Kohandil Khan wanted to send his son Mohammed Omar Khan, and three hundred horsemen for his reception, but Captain Vikovich prevented the Sardar doing so. He entered the city alone, and put up in the house of Mirza Yaha.

"Captain Vikovich told the Sardars that he was the bearer of sixty thousand ducats. Out of the above sum he has a bill for forty thousand ducats on the treasury of Kirman, and that money will be paid in three months hence to Dost Mohammed Khan; ten thousand ducats he has in cash for the Sardars, who will get ten thousand more from Qayn, when they go with their army of Hirat.

"After a long discussion on both sides, the Sardars took the ten thousand ducats from Captain Vikovich, and divided them. Kohandil Khan has pitched one coss from the city on his way to Hirat, and troops are daily assembling to join him.

"The Russian Ambassador then asked the Shah his opinion of taking measures about Hirat: he told him to send money to the Afghan chiefs. The Shah said, 'When the Afghans come against Hirat, I will also order my forces in Khorasan to join them in attacking that city.' On this the Ambassador told the Shah if the city of Hirat was not even taken by the combined arms of the Afghans and Khora-

san, what then was the mode to reduce it; the Shah pointed out to the Ambassador that it was not according to Treaty, that Russian forces should pass through Persia, but now His Majesty would make no objection if that Government should send their army through it to reduce any country they liked. This permission from the Shah was received by the Ambassador with great thanks and pleasure. The Ambassador has gone with the Shah.

"The Sardars told Captain Vikovich that they were now quite satisfied about Hirat, but they feared for Qandhar, which may be taken by the English. He answered then, that it was not the law among Europeans that one nation should dare to conquer a foreign land in the presence of an officer from another, and therefore his (Vikovich's) presence will prevent the English coming. These words have made the Sardars totally fearless of any ill luck.

"On this the Sardars and also Captain Vikovich wrote separate letters to the Mirs of Sindh, saying that they should remain quiet for three months, and the Mirs will soon see them on the Indus with their army.

"The proceedings of Captain Vikovich at Qandhar are matters of notoriety here, and may have a prejudicial effect at Hyderabad. I also find that the Russians have sent presents to Ali Khan, the Bilochi chief of Sistan. I keep Colonel Pottinger informed on these matters, and indeed on all that is going on."

To Major R. Leech.

"I YESTERDAY asked Kohandil Khan what he meant by proceeding towards Hirat in the present crisis of affairs, and what was to be done with the English? He said that if the English were encamped on the plains of Qandhar, he could not help going as far as Farah. He said his only plan was to remain at Farah, as the Persians and Russians had told him; and if Qandhar in the interim should be taken or besieged, the Russians would have the blame; that the Russians would give money and troops to them, that they might come back and fight at Qandhar; and that if they did not find the English there, they might employ the resources put at their disposal to subdue Hirat.

"Sardar Kohandil Khan has left Qandhar, having distributed ducats to his army; he expected to arrive at Farah on the 9th of November.

"Captain Vikovich has brought one thousand kharvars of grain for the Sardar, that was in the fort of Shamshuddin Khan.

"Aladad Khan and Captain Vikovich arrived at Qandhar on the 17th October, bringing with them ten thousand ducats, which Kohandil Khan immediately applied for. The Russians answered, that it rested with Aladad Khan, to give the money as soon as the Sardars should start.

"On the 21st October, the Sardars pitched their pesh khanah (advanced tents), and received the ten thousand

ducats. Sardar Kohandil Khan took for his share two thousand seven hundred ducats; Sardar Rahamdil and Mehardil Khans took the same; Mir Afzal Khan received nine hundred and fifty ducats; and Mohammed Sadiq Khan the same sum.

"On the 22nd October, four messengers arrived from Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, saying that Sir A. Burnes and Lieutenant Wood had arrived at Peshavar with thirty regiments; that the Sikhs had retired from Peshavar, and urging the Sardars not to quit Qandhar.

"Sardar Kohandil Khan showed the letter to Captain Vikovich, who said that they were at liberty to act as they pleased. The Sardars said they would start in four days."

Sir Alexander Burnes.

"THIS agent does not wish to figure as a Russian, but as a Persian; he gives out that his proceedings are guided by Mohammed Shah's orders, whose ally and friend is his master the Emperor.

"Sardar Mehardil Khan has pitched at Vashien, Sardar Kohandil Khan (in company with Captain Vikovich) at Kishknakhued; and Sardar Rahamdil Khan, near the Hauz Madad, twelve coss from the city. All the troops are preparing to follow and join them.

"Abdul Saheb Khan, the servant of the Russian ambassador, passed through Qandhar on his way to Kabul, in charge of the dress of honour for Dost Mohammed Khan.

"Our intelligence from Qandhar has been all along accurate, and you will see that the letters sent from Qandhar to Hyderabad, under Captain Vikovich's instigation (if not by himself), have at last come to light, as stated in the sixth paragraph of Colonel Pottinger's letter of the 23rd instant (November, 1838), now forwarded. It now turns out that the chiefs of Qandhar have offered a portion of their Russian bribe to the chief of Kelat, and such is the unhappy fatality hanging over these disunited chiefs; which throws considerable light on the intrigues of Russia in that quarter, and in which Captain Vikovich is represented to have taken a prominent part.

"Captain Vikovich has given ten thousand ducats to the Sardars of Qandhar, and promised them ten thousand more when they arrive at Farah, and the same number again on reaching one march on this side of Hirat, and twenty thousand ducats on besieging that city. The Sardars have consequently left Qandhar, and arrived at Farah. Mehardil Khan has been sent back to Qandhar; for he was afraid of the Ghilzais making an insurrection, because the heads of that tribe, Abdulrahman Khan, and Sultan Mohammed Khan, the sons of Shahabuddin Khan, and Gul Mohammed Khan, the son of Khan, had received letters from Shah Shuja; and because in the city there were Haji Khan, Sohbat Khan, and Mama, in whom the Sardars had but little confidence.

"The Russian agent, who lately came to Dost Mohammed Khan, presented six hundred yards of long cloth and a few

pieces of broad cloth. He has put up at Mirza Sami Khan's.

"On the 11th December Sardar Mehardil Khan invited Captain Vikovich to a party at his house, where there were present Mulla Nasu, Nazar Mohammed Khan, and Haji Husain Alli Khan, the Persian ambassador. The Sardar told Captain Vikovich that he (the Captain) had told them (the Sardars) that on that side of the Indus was the British government, and on this side that of Mohammed Shah, who owes allegiance to Russia; that since they had also submitted themselves to Russian allegiance, it behoved him to assist them against the English, who are now going to invade Afghanistan. Captain Vikovich answered that they were not in allegiance of Russia, because though he had given them ten thousand ducats to set out for Hirat, they had not yet travelled twenty-five cosses during fifty days, and that when they arrived at Hirat he could assist them against any enemy. He also added that he was deputed to Amir Dost Mohammed Khan, and that the Amir had sent his letter to Russia by his man Habbu Khan, declaring himself a servant of the Russian government, and given an unsealed copy of it to himself; that the man had come as far as Qandhar, and then disappeared; that he sent the copy of the letter to his government, and received a letter for the Amir to the effect that he (the Amir) was not a servant but a friend; that if he wanted the Russian friendship he should write so, and it would send to him four lakhs of ducats and four officers skilled in artillery

and infantry exercise; and that he was waiting for an answer to that letter from the Amir, after the receipt of which he would return to Russia.

" He also stated that the Russian government had more reliance on Dost Mohammed Khan's intellect and power than on the chiefs of Qandhar, because he, notwithstanding his poverty, and being without means, is fighting against the Sikhs who are provided with everything."

CHAPTER XIII.

Reluctance of the Indian Government to interfere with Captain Vikovich—Proceedings of Count Simonich—Sir A. Burnes and Sir J. Macneil urge the necessity of vigorous measures—The north-western Frontier—Lord Wellesley's opinion—Policy of the British government—Shah Shuja—Correspondence, and extracts from various sources illustrative of British policy in Afghanistan—The British government resolve to restore Shah Shuja—Mission to Ranjit Singh—Tripartite Treaty—Preparations—Declaration of the Governor-General—Letter to the Shah of Persia.

It has been well known to all, and published in various papers, and in the government despatches, that the Earl of Auckland, then the Governor-General of India, did not attach much importance to the mission of Captain Vikovich and the Russian intrigues in Afghanistan; and judiciously considered that the whole matter should be decided by the authorities of England in Europe. But yet the circumstances, which were daily assuming more and more and now wearing constantly an unfavourable aspect, would neither dictate nor approve the policy

of his Lordship to treat always a subject of such magnitude thus slightingly. His Excellency Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador, with his other colleagues, was not only superintending and planning the assault upon Hirat, against the advice of the British minister, but was actually deputing agent after agent, and sending money and grain to the Amir of Kabul and the chiefs of Qandhar. Sir John Macneil was in the meantime dismissed by the King of Persia, and Sir Alexander Burnes by the Amir of Kabul. Both of these functionaries, well versed and experienced in the politics of the East, and noted for their knowledge of the feelings of that country, well proved also in their anxiety for the welfare of British India, and in their zeal to preserve the national honour, urged upon the Governor-General the consideration of the necessity so apparent for taking immediate steps to counteract the openly united intrigues and encroachments of the Russian ambassador and of the Shah of Persia, which had most effectually made their way into Sindh and the interior of India. It is unnecessary for me to beg the readers to trace their way back in the histories of former times, and in the records and

publications which are so numerous, and which all bear a prompt witness that whenever any rumours of invasion from the west of the Indus have been afloat they have always excited very much the people of India. Even Zaman Shah contemplated at one time the plan of an expedition to proceed towards Lahaur, with the view to cross the Sutlej, and his correspondence with the Tipu Sultan were topics of great deliberation and interest to the British authorities of that day. Notwithstanding that barrier of British India was admitted by Lord Wellesley to be the territory of Ranjit Singh, yet his Lordship, in consideration for the safety of the English possessions, made a capital remark, regardless of all ties of friendship which might be in existence with the rulers of that country: "I consider that we have nothing more between us and the most desirable frontier everywhere but the territory of Ranjit. If we were threatened on the north-west, for example, by an invasion of the Russians, we should, in self-defence, be obliged to take possession of the country to the foot of the hills, as we could not leave an intermediate space in which the enemy might establish themselves." The Earl of Auckland was also

informed that the letters of Sir John Macneil, despatched to Sir A. Burnes through the Bombay government, "proved all previous conjectures to be well founded, and that M. Vikovich was what he had given himself out, an agent from the Emperor of Russia." Meanwhile the reports of the unpopularity and the internal dissensions of the government of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan had frequently reached the ears of our government. Taking all these points into one deliberate view, it became necessary that a friendly government should be established in Afghanistan, and the Barakzai chiefs, who are inimically disposed towards the British, must be removed from the usurped authority of Afghanistan.

It is well known that the British government in India, alarmed at the startling advance of Napoleon, had deputed the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone for this purpose, and had entered into alliance with Shah Shuja-ul-mulk, who, by adverse circumstances, was since obliged to leave his dominions, and to take refuge in Lodianah. He had tried several times to accomplish the recovery of his throne, but through want of resolution had repeatedly failed in his

attempt. All the princes of India, and particularly those of Central Asia, nay, even some of the Barakzai, I have heard saying that Shah Shuja was driven away by his own servants, and sought refuge among, and the protection of, the English. They added, that these, by the rules of honour and as a powerful nation, were bound to replace him on the throne; that they would have done in this no more than was done by a former king of Persia, in the case of Dara Shikoh, when he fled through the fear of Aurangzeb. Though Shah Shuja, by his long inactive life and private residence at Lodianah, had lost the abilities of a sovereign, yet his name and person, and the hereditary right, were not only considered by the Governor-General to constitute him the best instrument for gaining the end in view, but were also recommended as such by the best authorities and of the largest experience. Sir Alexander Burnes, after his departure from Kabul, writes to the Earl of Auckland in these terms:—*

June 3, 1838.

"It is clear that the British government cannot, with any credit or justice to itself, permit the present state of

* Sir John Hobhouse's Speech, page 33.

affairs at Kabul to continue. If this be left undone, they will succumb to Persia and Russia, and become the instruments for whatever those powers desire. I therefore distinctly state that the evil lies beyond Afghanistan itself, and must be dealt with accordingly.

"If it is the object of government to destroy the power of the present chief of Kabul, that may be effected by the agency of his brother, Sultan Mohammed Khan, or of Shah Shuja-ul-mulk; but to ensure complete success in the plan, the British government must appear directly in it, that is, it must not be left to the Sikhs themselves.

"Of Sultan Mohammed Khan, the first instrument at command, you will remember that his brother, Dost Mohammed, plainly confessed his dread of him if aided by Sikh gold, and with such aid the ruler of Kabul may be readily destroyed; but Sultan Mohammed has not the ability to rule Kabul: he is a very good man, but incapable of acting for himself; and, though fit as an instrument for getting rid of a present evil, he would still leave affairs as unsettled as ever when fixed in Kabul; and he is consequently a very questionable agent to be used at all.

"As for Shuja-ul-mulk personally, the British government have only to send him to Peshavar with an agent, and one or two of its own regiments as an honorary escort, and an avowal to the Afghans that we have taken up his cause, to ensure his being fixed for ever on his throne."

The opinions of Sir John Macneil with regard to

the right of the Sadozai family, or of Shah Shuja, are expressed in this manner:*—

"Though the sovereignty of the Afghans has passed out of the hands of Ahmed Shah's descendants, the Durrani tribe, it appears, maintain an undoubted ascendancy in the nation. The Barakzais have usurped the greater portion of the power of the Sadozais; but the latter family still maintains itself in Hirat, and has a strong hold on the prejudices, if not on the affections, of a large portion of the Durranis.

"That the Barakzais, holding Kabul and Qandhar in independence, would not appear to have conciliated the attachment of the Durranis, who depend in a great measure for their power on influences foreign to their tribe. To force their rule therefore on the people would not only be a difficult operation in itself, but, if sought to be effected through the mediation of the British government, would require a degree of support from us which we cannot, in my opinion, afford to give to the present possessors of power in Afghanistan, or rather to the ruler of Kabul, without bringing new elements of discord into action, productive of more evil to the peace of Afghanistan, and of the whole country, than the preservation of the sovereignty of the Afghans in the Sadozai family would be worth."

Sir Claude Wade, the political agent at Lodianah, having continued a rapid communication and inter-

* Correspondence relating to Afghanistan, No. 5, page 20.

course with all the chiefs of Afghanistan, and by this means possessing a full knowledge of the feelings of the inhabitants, who frequently visited Shah Shuja,* preferred that His Majesty should be placed on the throne in the room of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan.

"In this letter Sir Claude Wade endeavoured to impress upon Lord Auckland the opinion that Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk ought to be preferred to Dost Mohammed,—and stated why he differed from Sir Alexander Burnes on that point. Gentlemen would do well to peruse that important document, the facts stated in which, and the inferences drawn from them, are directly at variance with what was said by that Honourable Gentleman on the opposite side. In one place Sir Claude Wade says, 'My own sources of information, which have been repeatedly authenticated both by natives and Europeans, who have visited Kabul, lead me to believe that the authority of the Amir (Dost Mohammed) is by no means popular with his subjects, and many instances in confirmation of the fact might be adduced from the reports of Mr. Masson, even when that individual has been willing to render every justice to Dost Mohammed Khan's abilities."

As quoted by Sir Claude Wade,† who sums up his advice by these words:—

"I submit my opinions with every deference to the

* Sir John Hobhouse's Speech, p. 37. † Ibid., p. 39.

wisdom of his Lordship's decision; but it occurs to me that less violence would be done to the prejudices of the people, and to the safety and well-being of our relations with other powers, by facilitating the restoration of Shah Shuja, rather than by forcing the Afghans to submit to the sovereignty of the Amir."

Above all the authority of Mr. Masson, from his long intercourse with the Afghans, and from being the news-writer of the Indian government, will undoubtedly appear a predominant feature in the evidences already quoted.*

"The British government," said one of those on whose information that government acted (Mr. Masson), "could employ interference without offending half-a-dozen individuals. Shah Shuja, under their auspices, would not even encounter opposition; and the Amir (Dost Mohammed Khan) and his friends, if he has any, must yield to his troops or become fugitives. Another presumed recommendation of Shah Shuja was this—pointed out by the same authority. No slight advantage, were Shah Shuja at the head of government (in Afghanistan), would be that, from his residence among Europeans, he would view their intercourse in these countries without jealousy, which cannot be expected from the present rulers, but after a long period, and until better acquaintance may remove their distrust."†

* Thornton's History of British India, vol. vi. p. 150.

† Correspondence relating to Afghanistan, No. 5, p. 20.

"The failure of Shah Shuja is now most sincerely lamented by all reflecting minds: I myself, however, rejoiced at it at the time, but the course of events seems to prove that his success would have been felicitous to the country, and the wishes of all classes even now turn to his restoration.

"I must confess," writes Mr. Masson to Sir Claude Wade,* "I am not very sanguine as to any very favourable result from negotiations with the Barakzais (that is Dost Mohammed and his brothers). They are chiefly indeed their own enemies; but their eternal and unholy dissensions and enmities have brought them to be considered as pests to the country, and the likelihood is that affairs will become worse rather than better while they remain."

Mr. Lord and Lieutenant Wood, on their return from Qandarz, secured the unanimous voice of the population in Kabul against the Amir, and in favour of the Shah; the latter of whom thus expresses his own opinion:—

"Annoyed at Dost Mohammed's reception of Vikovich, the Russian emissary, and disquieted by the departure of the British agent, they looked to the Amir as the sole cause of their troubles, and thought of Shah Shuja and redress."

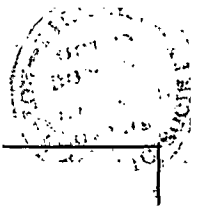
On these various and unquestionable evidences, given by the authorities well versed in the politics

* Sir John Hobhouse's Speech, p. 38.

of that quarter, where the danger was impending, the Earl of Auckland resolved to establish Shah Shuja on the throne, and thus to extinguish the flame of the united intrigues of Russia and of Persia on the west side of the Indus, before it extended to the eastern bank of that river. It was considered desirable, previous to forming an expedition for that purpose, to make the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Panjab, a party in this important undertaking. Shah Shuja, who was watching with extreme anxiety the proceedings of Sir Alexander Burnes's late mission in Kabul, and, as he said himself, praying for its failure, was now informed that the British government were to restore him to his dominions, using both their money and their arms in his favour.

The Governor-General of India deputed Sir William Macnaghten, Bart., on a mission to the Court of Lahaur; and Sir Claude Wade and Sir Alexander Burnes were also directed to co-operate with him. The mission was favourably received by the Maharajah,* and the negotiations commenced with good designs, and ended successfully. The

* See 'Ranjit's Court,' by the Hon. Captain Osborn.



THE LATE MAHARAJAH RUNJEET SINGH.

form of the agreement was in great portion the copy of that into which the ruler of the Panjab and the Shah had entered in 1833-4, with the exception of the third party—the British—which had now become an accomplice in the affair, and which agreed that while the Sikh and English troops engaged and encamped together to promote the cause of the Shah, the slaughter of the kine should not be permitted, as being against the religion of the Sikhs. The following is the copy of this tri-partite treaty, which must be borne in mind, and referred to on the release and departure of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan from the British territory, through the Panjab, escorted by Captain Nicolson.

Treaty between the British Government, Ranjit Singh, and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, concluded at Lahore on the 26th June, 1838.

"WHEREAS a treaty was formerly concluded between the Maharajah Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, consisting of fourteen articles, exclusive of the preamble and conclusion: and whereas the execution of the provisions of the said treaty was suspended for certain reasons: and whereas at this time Sir William H. Macnaghten having been de-

puted by the Right Honourable George Lord Auckland, G.C.B., Governor-General of India, to the presence of the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, and vested with full powers to form a treaty in a manner consistent with the friendly engagements subsisting between the two states, the treaty aforesaid is revived and concluded, with certain modifications; and four new articles have been added thereto, with the approbation and in concert with the British government, the provisions whereof, as contained in the following eighteen articles, will be duly and faithfully observed.

" 1. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk disclaims all title on the part of himself, his heirs and successors, to all the territories lying on either bank of the river Indus that may be possessed by the Maharajah, viz., Kashmir, including its limits E. W. N. S., together with the fort of Attak, Chach, Hazara, Khebel, Aub, and its dependencies, on the left bank of the aforesaid river, and on the right bank Peshavar, with the Usafzai territory, Khataks, Hasht Nagar, Michni, Kohat, Hangu, and all the places dependant of Peshavar, as far as the Khaibar Pass; Bannu, the Vazivi territory, Daur, Tank Gorak Kalabagh, and Khushalgar, with their dependant districts, Dera Ismail Khan and its dependencies, together with Dera Ghazi Khan, Kot Mittan, Omar Kot, and their dependant territory, Sanghur, Harand, Dajal, Hajipur Rajanpur, and the three Kachis, as well as Munkera, with its district, and the province of Multan, situated on the left bank. These countries and places are considered to be the property, and to form the estate of the Maharajah; and

the Shah neither has, nor will have, any concern with them; they belong to the Maharajah and his posterity, from generation to generation.

"2. The people of the country on the other side of Khaibar will not be suffered to commit robberies and aggressions, or any disturbances, on this side. If any defaulter on either state, who has embezzled the revenue, take refuge in the territory of the other, each party engages to surrender him; and no person shall obstruct the passage of the stream which issues out of the Khaibar defile, and supplies the fort of Fatahghar with water, according to ancient usage.

"3. As, agreeably to the Treaty established between the British Government and the Maharajah, no one can cross from the left to the right bank of the Satlej without a passport from the Maharajah, the same rule shall be observed regarding the passage of the Indus, whose waters join the Satlej, and no one shall be allowed to cross the Indus without the Maharajah's permission.

"4. Regarding Shikarpur and the territory of Sindh, lying on the right bank of the Indus, the Shah will agree to abide by whatever may be settled as right and proper, in conformity with the happy relations of friendship subsisting with the Maharajah through Sir C. Wade.

"5. When the Shah shall have established his authority in Kabul and Qandhar, he will annually send the Maharajah the following articles, viz. fifty-five high-bred horses, of approved colour and pleasant paces, eleven Persian scymitars, seven Persian poniards, twenty-five good mules, fruits

of various kinds, both dry and fresh, and Sirdas or musk melons, of a sweet and delicate flavour (to be sent throughout the year), by way of Kabul river and Peshavar; grapes, pomegranates, apples, almonds, raisins, pistahs or chesnuts, an abundant supply of each; as well as a piece of satin of every colour; choghas of fir, kim khabs wrought with gold and silver, and Persian carpet, altogether to the number of one hundred and one pieces; all these articles the Shah will continue to send to the Maharajah every year.

"6. Each party shall address the other on terms of equality.

"7. Merchants of Afghanistan who may be desirous of trading to Lahaur, Amratsar, or any other parts of the Maharajah's possessions, shall not be stopped or molested on their way; on the contrary, strict orders shall be issued to facilitate their intercourse, and the Maharajah engages to observe the same line of conduct on his part with respect to Afghanistan.

"8. The Maharajah will yearly send to the Shah the following articles, in the way of friendship—fifty-five pieces of shawls, twenty-five pieces of muslin, eleven dupatahs, five pieces of kim khab, five scarfs, five turbans, fifty-five loads of barah rice (peculiar to Peshavar).

"9. Any of the Maharajah's officers who may be deputed to Afghanistan to purchase horses, or on any other business, as well as those who may be sent by the Shah into the Panjab for the purpose of purchasing piece goods or shawls, &c. to the amount of eleven thousand rupees, will

be treated by both sides with due attention, and every facility will be afforded to them in the execution of their commissions.

"10. Whenever the armies of the two states may happen to be assembled at the same place, on no account shall the slaughter of kine be permitted to take place.

"11. In the event of the Shah receiving an auxiliary force from the Maharajah, whatever booty may be acquired from the Barakzais in jewels, horses, arms great and small, shall be equally divided between the two contracting parties. If the Shah should succeed in obtaining possession of such property without the assistance of the Maharajah's troops, the Shah agrees to send a portion of it to the Maharajah by way of friendship.

"12. An exchange of missions charged with letters and presents shall constantly take place between the two parties.

"13. Should the Maharajah require the aid of any of the Shah's troops, in furtherance of the objects contemplated by this Treaty, the Shah engages to send a force, commanded by one of his principal officers. In like manner the Maharajah will furnish the Shah, when required, with an auxiliary force, composed of Mahomedans, and commanded by one of his principal officers, as far as Kabul, in furtherance of the objects contemplated by this Treaty. When the Maharajah may go to Peshavar the Shah will depute a Shahzada to visit him, on which occasion the Maharajah will receive and dismiss him with the honour and consideration due to his rank and dignity.

"14. The friends and enemies of each of the three high powers, that is to say, the British and Sikh Governments and that of Shuja-ul-Mulk, shall be the friends and enemies to all and to each of them.

"15. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk engages, after the attainment of his object, to pay without fail to the Maharajah the sum of two lakhs of rupees, of the Nanak, Shahv, or Kaldar currency, calculating from the date on which the Sikh troops may be despatched for the purpose of reinstating His Majesty in Kabul, in consideration of the Maharajah stationing a force of not less than five thousand men, cavalry and infantry, of the Mahomedan persuasion, within the limits of the Peshavar territory, for the support of the Shah, and to be sent to the aid of His Majesty whenever the British Government, in concert and counsel with the Maharajah, shall deem their aid necessary; and when any matter of great importance may arise in the westward, such measures will be adopted with regard to it as may seem expedient and proper at the time to the British and Sikh Governments. In the event of the Maharajah requiring the aid of any of the Shah's troops, a deduction will be made in the subsidy, proportioned to the period for which such aid may be afforded; and the British Government holds itself responsible for the punctual payment of the above sum annually to the Maharajah so long as the provisions of this Treaty are duly observed.

"16. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk agrees to relinquish, for himself, his heirs, and successors, all claims of supremacy and

arrears of tribute over the territories now held by the Mirs of Sindh (which will continue to belong to the Mirs and their successors in perpetuity), on condition of the payment to him by the Mirs of such a sum as may be determined, under the mediation of the British Government, one million five hundred thousand of rupees, and of such payment being made over by him to the Maharajah Ranjit Singh on these payments being completed. Article 4, of 12th March, 1833, will be considered cancelled, and the customary interchange of letters and suitable presents between the Maharajah and the Mirs of Sindh shall be maintained as heretofore.

"17. When Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk shall have succeeded in establishing his authority in Afghanistan, he shall not attack nor molest his nephew the ruler of Hirat, in the possession of the territories subject to his government.

"18. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk binds himself, his heirs, and successors, to refrain from entering into negotiations with any foreign state without the knowledge and consent of the British and Sikh Governments, and to oppose any power having the desire to invade the Sikh or British territories by force of arms, to the utmost of his ability.

"The three powers, parties in this Treaty, viz. the British Government, the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, cordially agree to the foregoing articles. There shall be no deviation from them in any way whatever, and in that case the present Treaty shall be considered binding for ever, and this Treaty shall come into operation from and

after the date on which the seals and signatures of the three contracting parties shall have been affixed.

"Done at Lahaur, this 26th day of June, in the year of our Lord 1838, corresponding with the 15th of the mouth of Asarh, 1895, æra Bikarmajit.

(Signed) "AUCKLAND,
"RANJIT SINGH,
"SHAH SHUJAH-UL-MULK."

While the Governor-General was ratifying the above-mentioned treaty with the Maharajah, and with Qazi Mohammed Husain, on the part of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, and was framing the plan of the projected expedition, the arrival of advices from England, "characterized doubtless by Lord Palmerston's usual vigour,* led to the renewed considera-

* I forgot to mention in the preceding and proper place, when I was invited by the minister of the Amir of Kabul, in the presence of M. Vikovich, the conversation turned on the composition, taste, and love of poetry. The Russian agent said to the minister that Europeans consider the taste for poetry a sign of lazy habits, but the scientific inventions productive of wealth; and the tact of the principal leaders of the politics of the states are the national amusement and talk of the day. The Mirza replied that if that was the case, no nation in Europe can boast of excelling in science more than the English; and their successful career in India, China, and Barmis says much for the excellence of their politics. Here M. Vikovich hesitatingly replied that Russia has now roused from slumber, and her mi-

QUAZI MAHOMED HUSSAN KHAN.

tion of the plan for establishing a British influence at Kabul, by the restoration of Shah Shuja," strengthened and confirmed the determination of the Earl of Auckland, and thus the expedition of Afghanistan was resolved on.

On the return of Sir William Macnaghten from the Court of Lahaur, preparations were made to put the contemplated schemes of policy into immediate execution, and the declaration of war was proclaimed and circulated in all parts of India and Afghanistan.

Declaration on the part of the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India.

Simla, 1st October, 1838.

"THE Right Honourable the Governor-General of India having, with the concurrence of the Supreme Council, directed the assemblage of a British force for service across the Indus, his Lordship deems it proper to publish the

---

nister Count Nesselrode is considered at the present age to be matchless in politics, and would shake the whole of Europe if there was not one rival for him, 'Vazir i daval i Kharajah Inglisyah (the English minister for the foreign affairs), Lord Palmerston." He also added that Louis Philippe, King of the French, is the wisest sovereign, but fears Count Nesselrode, who has not yet acknowledged him as King of that nation.

following exposition of the reasons which have led to this important measure.

"It is a matter of notoriety that the treaties entered into by the British government in the year 1832 with the Mirs of Sindh, the Navab of Bahavalpur, and the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, had for their object, by opening the navigation of the Indus, to facilitate the extension of commerce, and to gain for the British nation in Central Asia that legitimate influence which an interchange of benefits would naturally produce.

"With a view to invite the aid of the *de facto* rulers of Afghanistan in the measures necessary for giving full effect to those treaties, Sir Alexander Burnes was deputed, towards the close of the year 1836, on a mission to Dost Mohammed Khan, the chief of Kabul. The original subjects of that officer's mission were purely of a commercial nature. Whilst Sir Alexander Burnes, however, was on his journey to Kabul, information was received by the Governor-General that the troops of Dost Mohammed Khan had made a sudden and unprovoked attack on those of our ancient ally the Maharajah Ranjit Singh. It was naturally to be apprehended that His Highness the Maharajah would not be slow to avenge the aggression; and it was to be feared that the flames of war being once kindled in the very regions into which we were endeavouring to extend our commerce, the peaceful and beneficial purposes of the British government would be altogether frustrated. In order to avert a result so calamitous, the Governor

General resolved on authorising Sir Alexander Burnes to intimate to Dost Mohammed Khan that if he should evince a disposition to come to just and reasonable terms with the Maharajah, his Lordship would exert his good offices with his Highness for the restoration of an amicable understanding between the two powers. The Maharajah, with the characteristic confidence which he had uniformly placed in the faith and friendship of the British, at once assented to the proposition of the Governor-General, to the effect that, in the meantime, hostilities on his part should be suspended.

"It subsequently came to the knowledge of the Governor-General that a Persian army was besieging Hirat; that intrigues were actively prosecuted throughout Afghanistan, for the purpose of extending Persian influence and authority to the banks of, and even beyond, the Indus; and that the court of Persia had not only commenced a course of injury and insult to the officers of Her Majesty's mission in the Persian territory, but had afforded evidence of being engaged in designs wholly at variance with the principles and objects of its alliance with Great Britain.

"After much time spent by Sir A. Burnes in fruitless negotiation at Kabul, it appeared that Dost Mohammed Khan, chiefly in consequence of his reliance upon Persian encouragement and assistance, persisted, as respected his misunderstanding with the Sikhs, in urging the most unreasonable pretensions, such as the Governor-General could not, consistently with justice and his regard for the friendship of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, be the channel of submitting

to the consideration of his Highness; that he avowed schemes of aggrandizement and ambition injurious to the security and peace of the frontiers of India; and that he openly threatened, in furtherance of those schemes, to call in every foreign aid which he could command. Ultimately, he gave his undisguised support to the Persian designs in Afghanistan, of the unfriendly and injurious character of which, as concerned the British character in India, he was well apprized, and by his utter disregard of the views and interests of the British government, compelled Sir A. Burnes to leave Kabul without having effected any of the objects of his mission.

"It was now evident that no further interference could be exercised by the British government to bring about a good understanding between the Sikh ruler and Dost Mohammed Khan, and the hostile policy of the latter chief showed too plainly that, so long as Kabul remained under his government, we could never hope that tranquillity of our neighbourhood would be secured, or that the interests of our Indian empire would be preserved inviolate.

"The Governor-General deems it in this place necessary to revert to the siege of Hirat and the conduct of the Persian nation. The siege of that city has now been carried on by the Persian army for many months. The attack upon it was an unjustifiable and cruel aggression, perpetrated and continued notwithstanding the solemn and repeated remonstrances of the English envoy at the court of Persia, and after every just and becoming offer had been made and re-

jected. The besieged have behaved with a gallantry and fortitude worthy of the justice of their cause; and the Governor-General would yet indulge the hope that their heroism may enable them to maintain a successful defence until succours shall reach them from British India. In the meantime the ulterior designs of Persia, affecting the interests of the British government, have been, by a succession of events, more and more openly manifested. The Governor-General has recently ascertained by an official despatch from Sir J. Macneil, Her Majesty's envoy, that His Excellency has been compelled, by a refusal of his just demands, by a systematic course of disrespect adopted towards him by the Persian government, to quit the court of the Shah, and to make a public declaration of the cessation of all intercourse between the two governments. The necessity under which Great Britain is placed of regarding the present advance of the Persian army into Afghanistan as an act of hostility towards herself, has also been officially communicated to the Shah, under the express of Her Majesty's Government.

"The chiefs of Qandhar (brothers of Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul) have avowed their adherence to the Persian policy, with the same full knowledge of its opposition to the rights and interests of the British nation in India, and have been openly assisting in the operations against Hirat.

"In the crisis of affairs consequent upon the retirement of our envoy from Kabul, the Governor-General felt the importance of taking immediate measures for arresting the

rapid progress of foreign intrigue and aggression towards our territories.

"His attention was naturally drawn at this conjuncture to the position and claims of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, a monarch who, when in power, had cordially acceded to the measures of united resistance to external enmity, which were at that time judged necessary by the British government, and who, on his empire being usurped by its present rulers, had found an honourable asylum in the British dominions.

"It had been clearly ascertained, from the information furnished by the various officers who have visited Afghanistan, that the Barakzai chiefs, from their disunion and unpopularity, are ill-fitted, under any circumstances, to be useful allies to the British government, and to aid us in our just and necessary measures of national defence. Yet so long as they refrained from proceedings injurious to our interests and security, the British Government acknowledged and respected their authority; but a different policy appeared to be now more than justified by the conduct of those chiefs, and to be indispensable to our own safety. The welfare of our possessions in the East requires that we should have on our western frontier an ally who is interested in resisting aggression and establishing tranquillity, in the place of chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power, and seeking to promote schemes of conquest and aggrandizement.

"After serious and mature deliberation, the Governor-

General was satisfied that a pressing necessity, as well as every consideration of policy and justice, warranted us in espousing the cause of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, whose popularity throughout Afghanistan had been proved to his Lordship by the strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities. Having arrived at this determination, the Governor-General was further of opinion that it was just and proper no less from the position of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, than from his undeviating friendship towards the British Government, that his Highness should have the offer of becoming a party to the contemplated operations.

"Sir William H. Macnaghten was accordingly deputed in June last to the court of his Highness, and the result of his mission has been the conclusion of a tripartite treaty by the British Government, the Maharajah, and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, whereby his Highness is guaranteed in his present possessions, and has bound himself to co-operate for the restoration of the Shah to the throne of his ancestors. The friends and enemies of any one of the contracting parties have been declared to be the friends and enemies of all.

"Various points had been adjusted which had been the subjects of discussion between the British Government and his Highness the Maharajah, the identity of whose interests with those of the Honourable Company has now been made apparent to all the surrounding states. A guaranteed independence will, upon favourable conditions, be tendered to the Mirs of Sindh, and the integrity of Hirat, in the possession of its present ruler, will be fully respected; while

by the measures completed or in progress, it may reasonably be hoped that the general freedom and security of commerce will be promoted; that the name and just influence of the British government will gain their proper footing among the nations of Central Asia; that tranquillity will be established upon the most important frontier of India; and that a lasting barrier will be raised against hostile intrigue and encroachment.

"His Majesty Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk will enter Afghanistan, surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army. The Governor-General confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on the throne by his own subjects and adherents; and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn. The Governor-General has been led to these measures by the duty which is imposed on him of providing for the security of the possessions of the British crown; but he rejoices that, in the discharge of his duty, he will be enabled to assist in restoring the union and prosperity of the Afghan people. Throughout the approaching operations, British influence will be sedulously employed to further every measure of general benefit, to reconcile differences, to secure oblivion of injuries, and to put an end to the distractions by which, for so many years, the welfare and happiness of the Afghans have been impaired. Even to the chiefs, whose hostile proceedings have given just cause of

offence to the British Government, it will seek to secure liberal and honourable treatment, on their tendering early submission, and ceasing from opposition to that course of measures which may be judged the most suitable for the general advantage of their country.

"By order of the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India.

(Signed) "W. H. MACNAGHTEN,
"*Secretary to the Government of India,*
"*with the Governor-General.*"

Immediately after this a few men of war were ordered through the Bombay government to land troops in the Persian island named Kharak; and having taken possession of the place, waited there for further advice. It was also suggested that a large number of British forces should be collected at Firozpur, and proceeding thence in company with the Shah Shuja, should march upon Kabul, passing through Sindh, the Bolan Pass, Qandhar, and Ghazni; and that the Shah Zadah Taimur, with the Sikh contingent, should shape his course within the Panjab, so as to divert the attention of the Kabul chief from the Khaibar side. The rendezvous of the troops, now nominated the army of the Indus, was appointed

to be at Firozpur, where the Governor-General had an interview with the Maharajah Ranjit Singh.

Let us turn back to the affairs in Persia. Sir John Macneil, who was compelled to leave the Persian camp, and who was on his way back to the Turkish frontier, was now apprised of the arrival of the man of war, and wrote immediately to Colonel Stoddart, still in the Persian camp, to inform the Shah of the proceedings undertaken by the British government, and if his Majesty were not to relinquish the siege of Hirat, the army now landed in the island of Kharak will be directed to march through Persia. The gallant colonel submitted the following proposal to the Shah, which perplexed and brought His Majesty to his senses, and the bugle of retreat was sounded, and the siege of Hirat raised.

"I AM directed by Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary to state that he has been entrusted by Her Majesty's Ministers to inform your Majesty that the British Government look upon this enterprise in which your Majesty is engaged against the Afghans as being undertaken in a spirit of hostility towards British India, and as being totally incompatible with the spirit and intention of the alliance

which has been established between Great Britain and Persia. That consequently, if this project is persevered in, the friendly relations which up to this time have so happily subsisted between Great Britain and Persia must necessarily cease, and that Great Britain must take such steps as she may think best calculated to provide for the security of the possessions of the British crown.

"I am further directed to inform your Majesty, that if Hirat should have surrendered to your Majesty, the British Government will consider your Majesty's continuing to occupy that, or any other portion of Afghanistan, as a hostile demonstration against England.

"Her Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary anxiously hopes that, by speedily withdrawing the Persian army into your Majesty's own dominions, your Majesty will avert the inevitable consequences of persevering in a course of hostility to England.

"The British government also demands reparation for the violence offered to its messenger, which is a matter quite distinct from the question of Hirat. Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary trusts your Majesty will grant that reparation in the manner which he pointed out, and thus relieve the British Government from the necessity of having recourse to other measures to exact it.

"Your Majesty is no doubt informed by the government of Fars that a body of British troops, and a naval armament consisting of five ships of war, have already arrived in the Persian Gulf, and that for the present the troops have landed

on the island of Kharak. The measures your Majesty may adopt in consequence of this representation will decide the future movements and proceedings of that armament; but your Majesty must perceive, from the view which Her Majesty's Government has taken of the present state of affairs, and from the effect which must have been produced in the minds of Her Majesty's Ministers and the British authorities in India by the subsequent proceedings of the Persian Government, with which they were not then acquainted, that nothing but the immediate adoption of measures to comply with the demands of the British Government can induce the authorities acting under the order of that Government to suspend the measures which are in progress for the defence of British interests, and the vindication of British honour.

"In the meantime Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary will pursue his journey to the Turkish frontier, and will remove all the English from the Persian territory; but he trusts that the bad counsel of the ill-disposed persons who have induced your Majesty to persevere in a course which has placed affairs in this position will no longer influence your Majesty; and that, guided by your own wisdom and by a regard to the true interests of Persia, your Majesty will adopt such measures as will enable Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary to return to your Majesty's Court, and restore to its former footing of cordiality the alliance between the two governments. Your Majesty has seen that all Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipoten-

tiary has stated to your Majesty in regard to these matters, has been dictated by sincerity and truth, and by an anxious desire to avert the evils which it was obvious must result from a perseverance in the course which the Persian Government was pursuing; and he again assures your Majesty that nothing but immediate danger and injury to Persia can result from rejecting the demands of the British Government.

"That God may guide your Majesty to a wise decision, and that he may forgive those whose evil counsels have led to such a state of things, is the earnest prayer of an old and faithful servant, who has ever been a sincere well-wisher of the Shah and the Persian Government."

Many people, who pretended to be well informed in the affairs of Afghanistan, said, on the arrival of the dispatch of Colonel Stoddart, stating that the Persians had raised the siege of Hirat, that now there was no necessity any longer for the government of India to persevere in crossing the English army beyond the Indus into those distant regions. This circumstance, indeed, altered the disposition of the campaign in respect to the number of the troops, but it did not change the measures of the Governor-General; and in a political point of view his Lordship justly felt it incumbent upon himself to remem-

ber that there were many reasons in existence of great weight and importance which require the completion of his contemplated objects.

Firstly: Though the Persians had raised the siege of Hirat on the 9th of September, 1838, yet the forts and districts of Ghuryan, Kurukh, Sabzvar, and Farah, at two marches beyond the boundary of Qandhar, were still occupied by the Persian authorities; and from the following letters it will appear that the British officer at the court of Persia was urging upon the Persian government to give up the possession of those places to the Afghans, and that on the 29th of November, 1838, he had not succeeded in his negotiation; and I may safely state that the fort and district of Ghuryan were not restored by the Persians to the Hirat government till more than a year after the British had occupied Afghanistan, or long after the departure and failure of the mission of Major Todd from Hirat.

From Lieutenant-Colonel Sheil to His Excellency Mirza Masud, the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Tehran, Nov. 22, 1838.

"In the communication which Colonel Stoddart conveyed to His Majesty the Shah, from his Excellency the British

minister, subsequent to his departure from the Royal camp, his Excellency Sir John Macneil announced to His Majesty that if His Majesty should retain any portion of the Afghan territory, the British government will consider such a proceeding as a hostile proceeding against itself. Her Britannic Majesty's envoy extraordinary has now learnt that the troops which occupied Ghuryan, and also those which took possession of Farah, Sabzvar, and Khurrukh, in the name of the Shah of Persia, continue to hold those places in the name of His Persian Majesty.

" Agreeably to the instructions I have received from Sir John Macneil, I have the honour to request that your Excellency will furnish me with information on this subject, and I request you to state whether or not the troops which have occupied Ghuryan, Farrah, Sabzvar, and Khurrukh, hold these places for the Shah of Persia, or are subject to His Majesty's orders."

Tehran, Nov. 29, 1838.

" I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 10th Ramadan (28th November), in reply to the communication which I addressed to you regarding the continued occupation by the Persian government of Ghuryan, Farah, Sabzvar, and Khurrukh.

" Your Excellency having given no reply sufficient to convey the information I sought, whether the above places were garrisoned by Persian troops, or were held by troops in the

name of His Persian Majesty, I am obliged to conclude from your silence that the intelligence which had been received by His Excellency Sir John Macneil, on this subject, is correct, and that the above places are held by troops in the name of His Majesty the Shah, and are under His Majesty's orders.

"I am instructed by Her Britannic Majesty's minister plenipotentiary to intimate to His Persian Majesty's ministers, that he feels it to be his duty to protest against the continued occupation of Ghuryan by Persian troops being regarded as constituting any right on the part of Persia to retain permanent possession of that fortress or district.

"With regard to Farah, Sabzvar, and Khurrukh, I am directed by his Excellency Sir John Macneil to call on the Persian government to fulfil the engagement into which His Majesty the Shah entered at Hirat, of complying with the whole of the demands of the British government, and to issue the necessary orders for immediate evacuation of these places, furnishing me at the same time with an authentic copy of that order, for the information of the British government."

Secondly: If the army had not moved, the occupation of those places would not, in consequence of any negotiation, be abandoned by the Persians; and if they were allowed to keep it, the results were apparent, and are well described in a letter from Sir John Macneil to Lord Palmerston.

"If the Shah should effect the subjugation of any portion of Afghanistan, he will employ the influence of the chiefs who may have submitted to him to disturb the power and the quiet of those who have not; and when he has been elated with success, and has secured a footing in that country, from which it may be difficult to drive him, I fear that apprehension of a rupture with England would no longer deter him from prosecuting his conquests; and though he might hesitate to seek foreign aid for the purpose of getting possession of Hirat, he might not improbably be induced to have recourse to it for the purpose of enabling him to retain a conquest which he had already made."

Thirdly: M. Vikovich was even then distributing money to the chiefs of Qandhar, who, in adherence to the treaty concluded between them and Persia, and guaranteed by the Count Simonich, were acting inimically towards Hirat under the influence of the personal presence and guidance of Captain Vikovich.

Fourthly: If the Governor-General were to leave the chiefs of Qandhar and the Amir of Kabul to pursue their own plans, the result would be that Persian agents, superintended and directed by Russian officers, would be placed in the court of the above chieftains; and intrigues would have been conducted and extended by them even to the very

heart of India; for branch missions of the united states of Persia and Russia had already been passing through Sindh, &c.

Fifthly: By the Tripartite treaty, which was already ratified, the British government and the Lahaur Court were bound to replace Shah Shuja, who at the time was earnestly sought by the Afghans, and in whose person the English found the means of holding a friendly relation with the kingdom of Afghanistan.

Under all the preceding grave and urgent considerations the Governor-General ordered the march of the army of the Indus; and it left Ferozpor on the 10th of December, 1838. The whole number of the force available for employment in the Afghanistan expedition, according to Major Hough's account, was as follows:—

	Men.
1st. The army of the Indus (from Bengal) under Major-General Sir Willoughby Cotton .	9,500
2nd. Major-General Duncan's reserve division, at Ferozpor, &c.	4,250
3rd. Shah Shuja's contingent	6,000
4th. The Bombay force under His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir John (afterwards Lord) Keane	5,600

	Men.
5th. The Bombay reserve or Sindh force . . .	3,000
Total number to act in Sindh and Afghanistan	28,350

Previous to the opening of the campaign I was attached to the Mission, and the Governor-General, after a long conference with me on the various points connected with the progress of the army, and the advancement of the views of the government in Afghanistan, made me the bearer of his letters to the address of the bankers at Multan and to the Lohani merchants at Darahband, for the purpose of raising money, collecting supplies, and employing carriages for the use of the army. Sir Alexander Burnes was directed to go ahead of the army and negotiate an offensive and defensive treaty with the Mirs of Khairpur in the Upper Sindh; and Sir Henry Pottinger to form the same with the Mirs of Haidarabad in the Lower Sindh; while Major Mackison had to negotiate with the Navab of Bahavalpur, or the Daudpotra chief, to facilitate the progress of the army in his territory, and to supply Shah Shuja with certain equipage.

The bankers in Multan and the Lohanis in the

Derahbad were highly flattered with the contents of the letters from the Earl of Auckland. The former sent boats down the Chenab and the Indus, loaded with money and grain, to meet the wants of the army on its arrival at Shikarpur; and in addition to this they lent their personal assistance to Major Thompson and others, the commissariat officers who followed me into that city. The latter also collected a considerable number of camels, and brought provisions after the army to Qandhar.

The judicious proceedings and negotiations of Major Mackison with the Daudpotra chief gave ample comforts and easy means to get supplies to the army of the Indus; and I myself heard Sir Willoughby Cotton saying that every one in his camp seemed well satisfied while passing through the Bahavalpur territory.

As to the progress and results of the negotiations committed to Sir Alexander Burnes and to Sir Henry Pottinger in Sindh, I have only this remark to make in this place: that after a very short period of successful negotiations by those functionaries, and a short time of their absence from that country, the fate of that dominion has been finally doomed, and

it is now connected to and joined with the British empire of India; wherefore I deem it desirable to reserve my saying on such grave subject, will put the whole matter briefly into one view in a separate chapter. It will prove amusing to the readers to find from what I have quoted, the highest and unquestionable authorities on this point, that how justly and how far back the Mirs of Sindh had discovered our ambitious designs for the conquest of their country; and how prudently they suspected our travellers and even myself, who went to examine their country; and how far they were right in their anticipations is now clearly understood, since we have become the masters of their country, and they are banished.

END OF VOL. I.

London: Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES and SONS, Stamford Street.

00021048

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016